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# THE PURGATORIO

OF

## DANTE,

TRANSLATED.

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BY

ICHABOD CHARLES WRIGHT, M.A.

TRANSLATOR OF THE INFERNO.



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LONDON:

LONGMAN, REES, ORME, BROWN, GREEN, & LONGMAN;

NOTTINGHAM: WM. DEARDEN.

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1836.

TO  
THE MOST REVEREND FATHER IN GOD,  
WILLIAM,  
BY DIVINE PROVIDENCE,  
LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY,  
PRIMATE OF ALL ENGLAND,  
AND METROPOLITAN,  
THIS TRANSLATION  
OF THE  
PURGATORIO OF DANTE,  
IS,  
WITH PERMISSION,  
MOST RESPECTFULLY  
DEDICATED.

## INTRODUCTION.

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THE general design of the *Divina Commedia* has been sketched in the Introduction to the *Inferno*.—A work, however, so little known as the *Purgatorio* seems to require separate consideration.

Having shown in the *Inferno* the evil effects of the Papal government, by representing sinners, immersed in darkness and misery, as one vast kingdom of the dead, Dante now proceeds to describe another state of existence, wherein those who enjoy the light of true religion submit themselves to its remedial discipline. For the purpose of exhibiting this “second kingdom” in an allegorical form, agreeably to his general design, he adopts the prevailing idea of Purgatory, which his imagination bodies forth as a lofty mountain, where souls, in the course of a toilsome ascent, are purified from sin, and fitted to enter the heavenly mansions. \* At first sight, reference appears to be made solely to the world of spirits. That Dante, however, had a more useful and instructive object in view, is evident, when he himself tells us that the whole poem may be considered as

\* *Purg.* i. 5, 6.

an allegory of man in his capacity of meriting reward or punishment.\* This should be particularly borne in mind; since, from the title of the present work, it might be supposed that Dante was devoted to the Church of Rome, and intended merely to illustrate one of her peculiar doctrines. As a member, indeed, of the pure, primitive, universal, apostolical Church, from which the Romanists have apostatized, and to which we, as Protestants, continue to belong, Dante was a Catholic.—Yet though a Catholic in this, the true sense of the word,—so far from being a Papist, he was one of the greatest enemies the Popes ever had to encounter; and “views with the warmest indignation and zeal for religion the conduct of those evil shepherds whose iniquities had brought scandal on the Catholic faith.”† Hence the works of Dante were always regarded with extreme aversion by the Court of Rome, who would, if possible, have prevented their dissemination altogether. Failing in this endeavour, they exerted their influence among the expounders of the

\* “*Totius operis, allegoricè sumpti, subjectum est homo, prout merendo et demerendo, per arbitrii libertatem, est justitiæ præmianti et punienti obnoxius.*”—Dedication of the *Inferno*. Accordingly the spirits are frequently spoken of as men (see Note to *Purg.* iv. 25); and are exhorted to work while it is day. (Note to *Purg.* vii. 44.) Dante too, on arriving at the summit of the mountain, finds himself in the garden of Eden, which undoubtedly was situated on earth. Boyd indeed considered the internal evidence of itself conclusive as to Dante’s intentions on this point. See also Ugo Foscolo, *Discorso*, p. 379; and Biagioli, Note to *Purg.* i. 31.

† Introduction to the *Inferno*, p. xii.

poet to disguise his meaning ; and in this they succeeded so well, that they at last claimed Dante as a faithful son of the Church. \* Mutilated editions were published, omitting the most obnoxious passages ; † and for a century and a half the interpretation of the *Divina Commedia* was engrossed by the Jesuits. ‡ To conceal, mystify, and distort, was the object of commentators for a series of years ; and their misrepresentations were unconsciously adopted by their successors. § To these circumstances is greatly owing the obscurity in which the poem is supposed to be involved. Otherwise its real aim could not have been mistaken. Dante makes no secret of his opinions. In the *Inferno*, Papal Rome is openly declared to be the prophetic Babylon of the Revelations. || The utmost con-

\* Ugo Foscolo, *Discorso*, p.p. 381, 382. See also Note to Canto xxxii. 152. "In this manner, singularly enough, the poet of the Divine Comedy became authority both to Papists and Reformers." *Edinburgh Review*, No. 116, p. 415. Art. : Wright's Translation of the *Inferno* of Dante.

† Ugo Foscolo, *Disc.* p. 423.

‡ *Ib.* p.p. 423, 425, 427.

§ Ugo Foscolo, *Disc.* p.p. 342, 378. Boecaccio, who gave lectures on Dante in the University of Florence, was among the number. *Ib.* p.p. 363, 391. "When Boecaccio was charged with imposture by those who understood the mystic volume, he pleaded poverty as an excuse for receiving a salary to disfigure Dante."—Rosetti, *Sullo Spirito Autipapale*, p. 29. "The ancient compromise was renewed :—print as many editions as you please, on condition that you either conceal the true meaning, or aid us in inventing false ones."—*Edinburgh Review*, No. 116, p. 415.

|| *Inferno* xix. 106, where see Note.

tempt is shown for absolutions and indulgencies ; \* and the Popes themselves are denounced as Idolaters, and modern Pharisees. † In the *Purgatorio*, a whole canto ‡ is devoted to prove that the misery and wickedness of the world arise from the union of temporal and spiritual power in the person of the Pope. In the *Paradiso*, the first Pope desires Dante to reveal to the world the wickedness of his successors :—the saints are inflamed with indignation at the recital—and heaven is disturbed by an eclipse, such as took place at the death of our Saviour. § These are a few of the undisguised declarations contained in a poem, the object of which has, by an extraordinary exercise of priestcraft, been obscured for the space of five hundred years.

The beautiful mountain, destined to be the scene of his laborious journey, the poet had viewed afar off, when he first awoke to a sense of his miserable condition in the wilderness of the *Inferno*. || In the lower region, at its foot, are found indolent spirits, who have delayed repentance to a late period, and are doomed to wander during a term equal to thirty times the length of their procrastination, before they are admitted within the gate

\* *Inferno* xxvii. 100, 118.

† *Ib.* xix. 113. xxvii. 85.

‡ *Purg.* xvi. See Rosetti *Sullo Spirito Antip.* p. 257. It is remarkable that Popes are instanced as suffering for avarice in both the *Inferno* and the *Purgatorio*. (*Inf.* vii. 46. *Purg.* xix. 99, where see Note.)

§ *Paradiso*, xxvii. 35. See Ugo Foscolo, *Disc.* p. 386.

|| *Inf.* i. 13. 77.

of Purgatory. \* While they continue in this state they are placed under the superintendence of Cato of Utica, † a venerable old man, who appears to be introduced as a personification of self-control, or that true liberty, which consists in a perfect mastery over the passions. Among the spirits in these outskirts of Purgatory the poet spends a considerable time ; and eight cantos are occupied in relating the various incidents that occur. In the ninth canto, Lucia or Grace, who originally interested herself in obtaining for our poet the aid of Beatrice and Virgil, during the night assists Dante up the steep to the entrance of Purgatory ; ‡ when the Angel who guards the gate imprints on his forehead the marks of seven sins, from which he is to purify himself in the seven rounds of the mountain.

Admitted within the gate of Purgatory, § the poets proceed upward by a narrow way to the first circle or ledge. In this, Pride is punished with severe inflictions ; and on the sides of the marble rock are displayed examples of Humility—wrought by Dante in so striking and picturesque a manner, as to show most forcibly the peculiar skill of the imaginative sculptor. The remaining six circles, each devoted to the punishment of a particular vice, occupy several cantos. Of these, the fourteenth is distinguished for the bitter sarcasm and heart-felt sorrow with which the poet laments the degeneracy of Italy.

\* Canto iii. 140.

† *Ib.* ii.

‡ *Ib.* ix. 55.

§ *Ib.* x. 1.



Having effaced the stains of vice, and passed through the purifying fire, Dante is carried up a lofty stair to the summit of the mountain. A new scene here opens before us.\*—The garden of Eden is discovered in all its pristine beauty—lovely and deserted, as it is supposed to have remained since the expulsion of our first Parents; and waiting in readiness to receive the Daughter of Jerusalem, on her descent from Heaven, and to admit the redeemed into the presence of their King, upon his holy mountain of Zion.† A description of the terrestrial Paradise follows,—the living verdure of the forest tempering the fervour of the early day—the leaves trembling before the soft impulse of a gentle wind—while the birds in many a throng are joyfully hailing the matin hour. And, as if Dante was determined to embellish this part of his poem with all the most soothing ideas that nature suggests, the river Lethe is seen running through the meadow,—with its gentle wave bending down the grass that springs at its side, and—beyond all compare with earthly streams—clear and transparent :—

“ And yet it moved in darkness on its way,  
Dark, in the depth of that perpetual shade.” ‡

On the other side of the river, a lady now appears, walking alone, and singing, as she culls the flowers

\* Canto xxviii. The whole is noted by Alfieri as replete with beauty.

† See quotation from the *Ottimo Commento* in Note to xxx. 11, and xxxii. 100.

‡ xxviii. 31.

that adorn her path. The poet asks her the purport of her song; when, veiling her modest eyes, Matelda replies, that she is rejoicing in the works of her Creator; \* and, in answer to further inquiries, proceeds to explain, that the works of nature in this holy place are subject to no such irregularities as prevail on earth—that the flowers and trees grow spontaneously—that the two streams, Lethe and Eunoe, are not replenished by the uncertain supplies of rain, but issue from a never-failing source; endued—the one with power to take away all memory of sin—the other, to call each virtuous deed to mind. Following Matelda along the opposite bank of the stream, Dante has not proceeded far, when the forest is suddenly illuminated, and a sound of melody runs through the glowing air. Contemplating these “primæval fruits of the eternal Love,” he advances onward, till in the objects, whose dazzling splendour at first eluded his sight, he is able to distinguish seven candelabra, and in the music recognizes the song “Hosanna,” proclaiming the approach of our Saviour and the Bride. A procession advances, consisting of Saints arrayed in white, and Elders crowned with lilies. A triumphal car follows, intended to represent the chair of St. Peter, or the pure and primitive Church, before it was corrupted by Papal superstitions,—drawn, as afterwards appears, by a Griffon—in its two-fold nature emblematical of our Saviour, and surrounded by four

\* xxix. 80.

Cherubim. Rapt thus into the loftiest visions, Dante places before our eyes, with surprising distinctness, the mysterious images of Ezekiel and St. John. Beatrice at last appears, descending from Heaven, veiled in white, like the sun shrouded in a silver mist, and encompassed by a cloud of flowers, showered down upon her by angelic hands. \* At the sight of his long lost Lady, from whom he had at times suffered himself to be led astray, the poet is struck with awe, and acknowledges the full force of his ancient flame. In the mean time Virgil departs; when Dante, giving way to despair, is checked by Beatrice, who calls to him by name—"Dante, weep not;" and tells him that he has greater cause for tears than the departure of Virgil.—Assuming a disdainful air, she reproaches him with tardiness in seeking the beautiful mountain, and suffering himself to be drawn away from his "first love." "If," she says, "at my decease you were bereaved of the fairest form that nature or art ever designed, it became you not to have stooped to delusive attractions, but rather to have soared upwards, and contemplated me in my more exalted state."

"As little children with their eyes bent low,  
Stand listening—mute through consciousness of shame,  
Convicted and repentant;"—†

Even so stood Dante;—when Beatrice, perceiving him thus afflicted at merely hearing her words, desires him

\* xxx. 13. 22.

† xxxi. 64.

to look up and complete the measure of his penitence. On the Angels ceasing to sprinkle the flowers which fell around her, he is enabled to obtain a clearer view of the heavenly Maid; and at the sight is so stung with remorse, that he declares his detestation of all earthly allurements.—Recovering from a swoon into which he falls, he is led to the river Lethe by Matelda. After immersion, he is allowed to see the Griffon, and subsequently to gratify his longing eyes with a nearer contemplation of Beatrice, arrayed in all the charms of her second beauty. \*

The last two cantos are mainly occupied with an account of the allegorical procession before mentioned advancing to the foot of a wide spreading tree situated in the midst of the garden. Various mysterious events are there exhibited; when our Saviour and the Angels return to Heaven.† Beatrice informs Dante that he will not now remain long in the garden, but rejoin her after death in the kingdom of Zion; ‡ that at present he must observe the changes which the car or Church is about to undergo, and record them, on his return to earth, for the benefit of mankind. After meeting with various disasters, the Church, which in its primitive state had been adorned with all virtues and christian graces, is corrupted through the wealth and temporal dominion acquired by the Roman Bishops. Under their usurped authority the sacred edifice is com-

\* Ib. 138.

† xxxii. 89.

‡ Ib. 100.

pletely transformed, to the great grief of Beatrice; who, witnessing their intrigues with the Kings of the Earth, predicts the downfall of Papal Rome by the immediate agency of our Saviour.\* These events Dante is again desired to record; and in the moral of the interdicted tree is declared the vengeance that awaits those who, like the Popes, presume to establish an authority independent of God. The poet is then led by Matelda to the river Eunoe, whence he returns with invigorated powers, and with a capacity of soaring to the stars.

\* See Note xxxiii.

In explaining these latter mysterious cantos, frequent quotations have been made in the notes, from the *Ottimo Commento*, an anonymous commentary recently published (1828); but declared to be "the oldest without exception," by Ugo Foscolo, who justly adds: "From what I have read of it, it seems to me that no one could have had such an intimate knowledge of all the secrets of the *Commedia* except Dante himself;" and supposes it written by his son James. (*Discorso*, p. 389.) This knowledge the writer does not betray till he arrives at the conclusion of the *Purgatorio*; and as I had not read his annotations when the *Introduction* to the *Inferno* was written, it has been satisfactory to find the views there taken most fully confirmed.

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To form an idea of the construction of Dante's Purgatory, the reader must imagine—rising out of the sea a lofty mountain in the form of a cone, round which run seven circles or ledges, gradually diminishing in circumference. Being the reverse of the Inferno, a sugar loaf would represent its figure.

The seven circles are appropriated to the punishment of their several crimes, commencing with the greater crimes, in opposition to the Inferno, which commences with the less. In a similar way, however, is contrived a graduated scale of punishment—the circles becoming more and more contracted in their circumferences, as also rising to a greater altitude. At the highest point is situated the garden of Eden; from which the poet ascends to the celestial Paradise.

# **PURGATORY.**

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## **CANTO I.**

#### ARGUMENT.

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DANTE meets with Cato of Utica; described as a most venerable old man, to whose care the spirits in Purgatory are consigned. By his recommendation, Virgil girds Dante with a reed, as a sign of humility, and cleanses him with drops of dew.



## PURGATORY.

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### CANTO I.

O'ER the smooth waters of a milder sea 1  
The light bark of my genius hoists her sail,  
Leaving behind the flood of misery ;  
For now that second kingdom claims my song,  
Wherein is purified the spirit frail,  
And fitted to rejoin the heavenly throng.  
Wake into life the deaden'd notes again, 7  
O ye most holy Nine ! since yours' I am ;  
And let Calliope exalt the strain,  
Following my verse with that extatic sound,  
Which, to the wretched Picæ when it came,  
Dash'd all their hopes of pardon to the ground.

- Sweet colours that with orient sapphire shone, 13  
Collected in the tranquil atmosphere,  
Far as the highest circle's purer zone,  
Enjoyment to my weary eyes restored,  
Soon as I issued from that stagnant air  
Which o'er my sight and breast such sorrow pour'd.—
- The beauteous Star, to love and lovers dear, 19  
Was making all the orient laugh ;—so bright,  
She veil'd the Pisces, who attended near,—  
When to the other pole mine eyes I turn'd,  
And there beheld four planets on the right,  
By none save those in Paradise discern'd :  
Heaven seem'd to view their lustre with delight. 25  
O northern region, how bereaved art thou,  
These starry splendours banish'd from thy sight !  
When from their radiance I had turn'd my head  
Back to the northern hemisphere, whence now  
The constellation of the Wain had fled—
- Near me I saw an aged man alone, 31  
Whose look inspired devotion more profound  
Than to his father ever owed a son.  
His beard was long, and intermix'd with grey,  
Which falling with the hoary locks around,  
In double tresses on his bosom lay.

- So brightly o'er his face with heavenly light                    37  
Did those four hallow'd stars their lustre shed,  
Methought the sun was beaming opposite.
- "Tell who are ye, that stemming the dark tide,  
Have 'scaped the eternal prison of the dead?"  
Moving his venerable locks, he cried.—
- "Who was the guide and lantern to your track,                    43  
When forth from that profoundest night ye came  
Which makes the infernal vale for ever black?—  
Thus broken are the laws that govern Hell?  
Or are Heaven's counsels now no more the same,  
That, though accurst, ye dare approach my cell?"
- Instant my guide drew near,—and both by sign,                    49  
And by injunction, and by counsel given,  
In reverence made my eyes and knees incline;  
Then said: "I came not of my own accord;—  
At HER request who dwells enthron'd in heaven,  
To this lone wanderer, guidance I afford.
- But since more fully thou would'st fain be told                    55  
The reasons of our toilsome journey here,  
'Tis not for me such knowledge to withhold.—  
Never did he behold life's latest eve;  
But folly drew him to that term so near,  
Scarce had he time his error to retrieve.

In this extremity I brought him aid, 61  
As hath related been ; nor other way  
Was found, except the one I have essay'd.  
Him have I led throughout the realms of woe ;  
And now, the spirits, who beneath thy sway  
Perfection seek, my purpose 'tis to show.  
'Twere long to tell how I have lured him on : 67  
From heaven descends the grace which brings him here  
To list thy words, and look thy face upon.  
Let him from thee a gracious welcome find :  
He comes in search of Liberty ; how dear  
She is, he knows who life for her resign'd :—  
Thou knowest,—who for her could'st death despise 73  
In Utica, where erst was doff'd by thee  
The vest that shall hereafter glorious rise.  
By us unbroken are the laws of Hell ;  
For he still lives, and Minos binds not me ;  
But in that circle 'tis my lot to dwell,  
Where the chaste eyes of thy loved Marcia still 79  
Entreat thee, holy one ! to call her thine :  
Then, by her love, incline thee to our will.  
Through thy seven kingdoms suffer us to go ;  
And I will thank her for the deed benign,  
If thou disdain not to be named below."

“ So pleasing was my Marcia to my sight,” 85

He answered me, “ while I on earth remain’d,

That all she wish’d I granted with delight.

Now, since she dwells beyond the evil tide,

She cannot move me ; so the law ordain’d,

When I departed from the other side.

But if the mandate of a heavenly Dame 91

Direct thy steps, no need of flattery ;

Sufficient that thou ask me in her name.

Go then, and gird him with a simple reed,

And to his face the cleansing dew apply,

So that from every stain he may be freed.

For not, while any dimness clouds his eyes, 97

Might he by that great Minister be seen

Who watches here, and is of Paradise.

Around this islet coast, down, down below,

Where dash the waters on the margin green,

Such reeds amid the slime are wont to grow.

No plant, producing leaves, can there survive ; 103

None there, whose harden’d stem disdains to bend

Before the beating wave, remains alive.

Not by this way your homeward journey lies ;—

The rising sun will show you where to ascend

The hallow’d mountain at an easier rise.”

This said, he vanish'd :—I uprose in haste, 109  
Uttering no word, and drew unto my guide,  
While on his face my anxious eyes were cast.  
He then began : “ My son, thy steps by mine  
Directing, turn thee back ; for from this side  
To its low boundaries doth the plain decline.”  
Now 'gan the vanquish'd matin hour to flee ; 115  
And seen from far, as onward came the day,  
I recognised the trembling of the sea.  
We journeyed o'er the solitary plain,  
Like one who would retrace his wilder'd way,  
And till he finds it, seems to strive in vain.  
Reaching a spot where yet in conflict vie 121  
The sun and dew, and where a partial shade  
Prevents the surface from becoming dry,—  
Both hands upon the verdant herbage there  
My master now with gentle action laid ;  
And I, of his benign intent aware,  
Advanced my cheeks, with humble tears bedew'd ; 127  
When to my face, by hell's dark shades impair'd,  
Its former colour wholly he renew'd.  
Then came we to the solitary shore,  
That never witnessed his return, who dared  
With venturous bark its fatal waves explore.

He, as directed, straightway girt me round : 133

Each lowly plant (O wonderful to view !)

Soon as my master pluck'd it from the ground,  
Spontaneous in the self-same spot upgrew.



# **PURGATORY.**



## **CANTO II.**



#### ARGUMENT.

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A VESSEL, under the guidance of an angel, is seen coming over the sea, with spirits to Purgatory; among whom Dante recognises his friend Casella, the musician. He stops to sing one of Dante's sonnets, when, Cato reproaching them for their delay, they hasten up the mountain.

## PURGATORY.

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### CANTO II.

Now that horizon had the sun attain'd, 1  
By the high point of whose meridian clear,  
Jerusalem with golden light is stain'd ;  
And circling opposite to him, the night,  
Forth issuing from the Ganges, doth uprear  
The Scales, which fall when she has reach'd her height:  
So that Aurora's cheeks, where then I stood, 7  
Began through age an orange tint to wear—  
With white and vermeil colours late imbued.  
By ocean's shore we still prolong'd our stay,  
Like men, who, thinking of a journey near,  
Advance in thought, while yet their limbs delay :

When lo ! like Mars, in aspect fiery red, 13  
Seen through the vapours when the morn is nigh,  
Far in the west above the briny bed ;—  
So (might I once more view it !) o'er the sea  
A light approach'd with such rapidity—  
Flies not the bird that may its equal be.  
Now for a moment I had turn'd mine eyes 19  
To Virgil, when, on looking back, more bright  
It seem'd again, and of an ampler size.  
Anon, on either side emerging then,  
Something appear'd, I know not what—all white ;  
And gradually another met my ken.  
My master spoke not, till the forms of light 25  
First seen, were known for wings, now fully spread :  
But when the Pilot was reveal'd to sight,  
“ Bend, bend thee humbly down upon thy knee ;  
Behold God's Angel ; clasp thy hands,” he said ;  
“ Henceforth prepare such Ministers to see.  
See how he spurneth human means—nor oars, 31  
Nor other sail except his wings assumes,  
To speed his way between such distant shores.  
See how he raises them, to heaven directed,  
Fanning the air with those eternal plumes,  
Not, like to mortal coil, by change affected.”

- Nearer, and nearer still, as onward drew 37  
The Messenger divine, he seem'd more bright,  
So that mine eye could not endure the view,  
But fell to earth abased :—he to the shore  
Came with a little skiff, so swift and light,  
The wave it touch'd not, as it bounded o'er.  
Upon the poop the heavenly Pilot stood, 43  
With stamp of "Blessedness" irradiate :  
More than a hundred souls within I view'd.  
"What time came forth from Egypt Israel's train,"  
Harmoniously they chaunted as they sate,  
Nor ceased till they had closed that solemn strain.  
Sign of the holy cross he made them :—they 49  
Instant alighted all upon the strand ;  
And he as speedily retraced his way.  
The crowd which there remain'd, a wondering gaze  
Around them cast, as strangers to the land ;  
E'en like to one who objects new surveys.  
On every side, the sun shot forth the day, 55  
And had already with his arrows bright  
From the mid heaven chased Capricorn away ;  
When the new comers, looking upward, cried :  
"If ye be conversant with this fair height,  
Show by what pathway we may scale its side."

And Virgil answer'd : " Ye suppose that we 61  
Possess a full experience of the place ;  
But know that we are travellers, e'en as ye :  
Not long before you, by another way  
We came, so hard and difficult to trace,  
That an ascent like this will seem but play."  
The souls who, by my breathing, as they gazed, 67  
Knew I was still alive, all pallid now  
Appeared—such marvel in their minds was raised.  
To hear the news, e'en as the people press  
Around a herald with the olive bough,  
Trampling each other in their eagerness ;  
So round me all these happy souls repair ; 73  
And lingering still to look upon my face,  
Forget the streams that were to make them fair.  
One, who advanced before them, I beheld  
So bent on clasping me in his embrace,  
That me to like endeavour he impell'd.  
O shadows, save in outward aspect, vain ! 79  
Three times around his form my hands I threw ;  
As oft return'd they to my breast again.  
Wonder, I deem, was painted on my face ;  
For with a smile the shadow backward drew ;  
And I full eagerly pursued its trace.

He bade me with melodious voice refrain : 85

Then knew I who he was, and pray'd that he,  
To hold some converse with me, would remain.

“ Dear as thou wert to me alive—so dear  
Art thou,” he answer'd, “ now that I am free ;  
Wherefore I pause—but thou, why art thou here ? ”

“ This journey, my Casella, have I made 91

With purpose to retrace my steps again ;  
But thy arrival, why so long delay'd ? ”

“ No hardship do I suffer,” he replied,  
“ If he, who taketh whom he lists, and when,  
Hath oft this passage to my prayer denied ;

For of his will is righteous Will the guide. 97

He in his vessel hath for three months ta'en  
All who were anxious to pass o'er the tide :

Whence I (my face directed to the strand  
Where Tiber pours his tribute to the main)  
Was kindly added to his former band.

And thither now his wings doth he direct ; 103

For all the souls, not doom'd to join the throng  
By Acheron's shore, at Tiber's mouth collect.”

Then I : “ If here no ordinance annul  
Memory or practice of that amorous song,  
Erst wont in rest my every wish to lull—

Be pleased therewith to soothe my soul awhile,                    109  
Which, journeying hither with its earthly frame,  
Is so encumber'd and oppress'd by toil."  
'Love that within me speaks,' in accent clear  
Forth from his lips anon so sweetly came,  
That still its sweetness vibrates on mine ear.  
Such full contentment, that illustrious sage                    115  
And all the souls around him testified,  
Naught else, it seem'd, their senses could engage.  
Our way we held, intent to hear his song,  
When lo! the venerable old man cried :  
"How now, ye lingering souls? Why here so long?  
Haste,—to the mountain swiftly take the road;                    121  
And let your eyelids from those scales be freed  
Which rob you of the presence of your God."  
As when, collecting either tare or blade,  
The doves, united quietly to feed,  
(Awhile their custom'd haughtiness allay'd)  
If aught appear that causes them alarm,                    127  
All on a sudden quit the loved repast,  
Assail'd by greater care and fear of harm ;—  
So I beheld the band who join'd us last,  
Forsake the song, and speed them to the height,  
Like one not knowing whither bound :—such haste  
Urged us, impatient to pursue our flight.

# **PURGATORY.**

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## **CANTO III.**



#### ARGUMENT.



THE poets enquire the way up the mount from a troop of spirits they see advancing. One of these—Manfred, King of Naples—makes himself known to Dante, and relates the particulars of his death.

## PURGATORY.

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### CANTO III.

Soon as, dispersed throughout the holy plain, 1  
Those lingering souls had to the mount repair'd,  
Whose summit reason urges us to gain,  
I drew me closer to my faithful guide ;  
For how without his succour had I fared ?  
And who had lured me up the mountain side ?  
Inward remorse appear'd his soul to wring : 7  
O noble conscience, upright and refined,  
How slight a fault inflicts a bitter sting !  
Soon as his feet that eager haste forsook,  
Which robs each act of dignity, my mind,  
On one sole object erst intent—now took

- A wider range, by ardent fancy led ; 13  
And on the mount I fix'd my stedfast gaze,  
Which soars to heaven with most exalted head.  
The sun which, flaming red, behind us shone,  
Was broken by my figure—since its rays  
On me, as on a resting place, were thrown.  
Seeing a shadow from my form alone 19  
Cast on the ground, I turn'd me in dismay,  
Supposing Virgil, my loved escort, gone.  
Anon the bard drew close unto my side,  
Exclaiming : “ Why these idle fears betray,  
As though deserted by thy faithful guide ?  
’Tis evening now, where in the tomb is laid 25  
The frame in which I cast a shade of yore,  
To Naples from Brundusium convey’d.  
If now in front of me no shade appear,  
Bethink thee of the heav’ns ; nor marvel more  
Than at the rays which pass from sphere to sphere.  
True, heavenly wisdom hath our frames disposed 31  
To suffer torments, or of heat or cold ;  
Though how she acts is not to us disclosed.  
Insensate he, who thinks with mortal ken  
To pierce Infinitude, which doth enfold  
Three Persons in one substance.—Seek not then,

- O mortal race, for reasons,—but believe, 37  
And be contented ; for had all been seen,  
No need there was for Mary to conceive.  
Men have ye known who thus desired in vain ;  
And whose desires, that might at rest have been,  
Now constitute a source of endless pain ;  
Plato, the Stagirite, and many more 43  
I here allude to : ” then his head he bent,—  
Was silent, and a troubled aspect wore.  
Meanwhile the mountain's foot had we attain'd ;  
And so precipitous was there the ascent,  
Vainly had mortal limbs their sinews strain'd.  
The most uncouth and most deserted way. 49  
”Twixt Lerici and Turbià, is a stair,  
Compared to this, full easy to essay.  
Checking his steps—“ Now, who,” my master said,  
“ Can tell me where this mountain slopes—that there  
He may ascend who hath not wings to aid ? ”  
And while his looks were cast upon the ground— 55  
His mind intently pondering o'er the road,—  
And I was gazing on the height around ;  
Sudden appear'd upon the left, a race  
Of spirits drawing near, who scarcely show'd  
Their feet were moving, so composed their pace.

- “ O master !” I exclaim’d, “ lift up thine eyes ;— 61  
Some one among yon band of souls, I trow,  
Will counsel give, if thou canst none devise.”  
He look’d at me, and calmly then replied :  
“ Go we to meet them, since their steps are slow ;  
And thou, sweet son, do thou in hope abide.”  
A thousand paces forward had we gone— 67  
Still was that company as far away  
As a good thrower might impel a stone,—  
When back upon the rocks of that steep pile  
All drew, and firmly stood in close array,  
Like one in doubt, who stops to gaze awhile.  
“ O spirits elect, who well have run your race ! 73  
Oh, by that peace which, if I deem aright,  
Ye all expect,” said Virgil, “ tell the place  
Where slopes the mountain, that our feet may climb,  
If it be possible, its lofty height ;  
For who knows most, grieves most for wasted time.”  
And e’en as sheep forth issue from the fold, 79  
By one, by two, by three—while all the rest  
Stand timid, and to earth their noses hold ;  
And what the leader doth, they also do—  
If chance she stop, behind her closely prest—  
Simple and still—not knowing why : e’en so

I saw the leaders of this favour'd race 85

Now move, now pause, as their advance they made,—

Modest in look, and dignified in pace.

When intercepted on my right they found

The solar rays, so that a lengthening shade,

Far as the cavern, darken'd on the ground,

They paused—and somewhat back their steps withdrew ; 91

And all the others who behind them came,

Not knowing why, fell back some paces too.

“ Although ye ask not, frankly will I own,

He whom ye see still wears his human frame ;

Hence on the earth a broken ray is thrown.

Be not amazed ; in vain would he essay 97

To climb the summit of this mountain wall,

If heavenly virtue guided not his way.”

Thus spoke the master.—“ Turn and enter first,”

Exclaim'd that gentle band of spirits—all

Making a signal with the hand reversed :

And one of them began : “ Whoe'er thou be, 103

Turn hither, as thou journeyest, and declare

If upon earth my face was known to thee.”

To him I turn'd, and stedfast view'd his face ;—

Fair was he, handsome, and of noble air,

But of a wound his eyebrow show'd the trace.

All recollection humbly I disown'd, 109  
When sudden he exclaim'd, "Behold!" and then  
Above his breast he pointed to a wound,  
And smiling added—"Manfred is my name,  
Costanza's grandson: when thou shalt regain  
The living world, this favour let me claim.—  
Go to my beauteous child, whose offspring are 115  
The pride of Arragon and Sicily;  
And, spite of evil tongues, the truth declare.—  
Transpierced in battle by two mortal blows,  
I raised my soul in prayer to Him on high,  
Who peace and pardon willingly bestows.  
My sins were horrible, I must aver; 121  
But such wide arms hath Mercy infinite,  
She welcomes every soul that turns to her.  
Cosenza's shepherd, by Pope Clement sent  
To hunt me down—had he but read aright  
This text, in Scripture for his guidance lent,  
My bones had still their former place possess'd, 127  
Near Benevento, at the bridge's head,  
And, guarded by the mound, had been at rest:  
The wind now sweeps them, when the rain hath drench'd,  
Beyond the kingdom, far as Verdë spread,  
Whither he bore them, with the torches quench'd.

But their fell curses cannot fix our doom, 133

Nor stay the eternal Love from His intent,  
While hope remaining bears her verdant bloom.

'Tis true, that he who doth the Church offend,

And contumacious dies, though he repent

At last,—for all the space that he did spend

In that presumption—must, without this ridge 139

Rove thirty times as long ; unless such date

The availing prayers of holy men abridge.

See then the means how thou my soul may'st cheer,

Telling my good Costanza the estate

In which thou see'st me, and this ban ; for here

Have earthly vows a never failing weight."





# **PURGATORY.**



## **CANTO IV.**

#### ARGUMENT.



THE poets ascend the mountain through a narrow opening. They find several indolent spirits reposing in the shade, behind a large stone. With one of these, Belacqua, Dante holds a conversation.

## PURGATORY.

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### CANTO IV.

WHEN through excess of joy, or misery, 1  
Which any of our faculties enchains,  
The soul concentrates all its energy,  
It seems no other impulse to obey ;—  
And this dispels that error, which maintains  
More souls than one light up our mortal clay.  
And thus, when aught perchance is heard or seen, 7  
Which strongly to itself attracts the soul,  
Time flies, though man perceives not it hath been :  
For know, that hearing is a faculty  
Distinct from that which animates the whole ;  
And this appears enchain'd, while that is free.

- The truth of this I fully ascertain'd, 13  
When, listening to that shade, I look'd around ;  
For now full fifty steps the sun had gain'd,  
By me the while unnoticed, when we came  
Where—" Here, the way ye ask for may be found,"  
With voice unanimous the souls exclaim.
- A wider gap oft-times the village clown 19  
Closes with so much thorn as he may bear  
Once on his fork, what time the grape grows brown,  
Than was the pathway, by whose course my guide,  
And I behind him, scaled the rugged stair,  
Soon as that troop had parted from our side.
- Down may one go to Noli, or the high 25  
Bismantua climb—San Leo's steep ascend,  
With feet alone ; but here one needs must fly—  
With buoyant wing I mean, and with the plume  
Of strong desire, as I his steps attend  
Who gave me hope, and lit me through the gloom.
- Up through the broken rock we then proceeded, 31  
Which hemm'd us closely in on either flank,  
So that our hands as well as feet we needed :  
And when, at last, expanded to our view  
The plain that crown'd the summit of the bank,—  
" Master," I said, " which path shall we pursue ?"

- Then he : " Let not a step in thy career  
Decline ; but up the mountain follow me,  
Until some wise conductor shall appear."  
The summit far above man's ken was placed ;  
And steeper seem'd its haughty sides to be  
Than through mid quadrant line to centre traced.  
Wearied I was and of all strength bereft, 43  
When, " Turn and look, loved father !" I began ;  
" If thou desert me, I alone am left."  
" Drag thee to yonder cornice," he replied,  
" My son ;" and pointed to a ledge, that ran  
A little higher round the mountain side.  
His words so spurr'd me on, I forced my way, 49  
Struggling on hands and knees his pace to keep,  
Until the circling ledge beneath me lay.  
There sate we both, upon the bank reclined,  
Facing the east, where first we climb'd the steep ;  
Thus oft a retrospect delights the mind.  
To the low shores I first direct mine eyes, 55  
Then lift them to the sun, in wondering gaze,  
To see how from the left his beams arise.  
The bard observed how on the car of light  
My eyes were wholly fix'd, in dull amaze,  
Where 'twixt the north and us it struck our sight :

- “If Jove’s twin progeny,” to me he said, 61  
“In company with that bright mirror were,  
Whose guiding radiance high and low is shed,—  
The ruddy Zodiac then would’st thou behold  
Round wheeling closer still to either Bear,  
Unless it deviate from its pathway old.  
How this may be, if thou desire to know, 67  
Imagine Sion with this mountain high  
Placed upon earth together, so that thou  
Should’st have but one horizon for the two,  
But different hemispheres ; and thus thine eye,  
Along that path which Phaëton ill knew,  
Will see the sun reach one in his career, 73  
And then the other, on the opposing side ;  
If that thine intellectual sight be clear.”  
“Never, in truth, O Master, I beheld  
With such clear intellect as now,” I cried,  
“(What erst my genius to discover fail’d)  
How the mid circle that doth earth enfold,— 79  
In terms of science the Equator hight—  
And situate ’twixt the extremes of heat and cold,  
Runs northward, for the reason given—though, view’d  
By those who dwell in Palestine, its site  
Lies tow’rds a region more with heat endued.—

But I would gladly learn,—deign thou to teach— 85

What height we have to ascend ; for higher far  
The hill uprises than mine eyes can reach."

"Such is this mountain's nature," he replied,

"That difficult the first steps always are,

But easier, as man scales its lofty side.

Hence, when so pleasant it to thee shall seem, 91

That the ascending shall as easy be,

As in a boat the gliding down a stream,—

Then wilt thou have attain'd thy journey's end ;

Then rest from thy fatigue awaiteth thee :

I say no more ;—on this for truth depend."

When he had brought his converse to a close, 97

A voice was heard : "Before that road be pass'd,

Necessity may force thee to repose."

Each, as attracted by the sound we turn'd,

Saw on the left a stone of measure vast,

Which neither I nor Virgil had discern'd.

Thither we drew ; and there some persons stood, 103

Who in the shade behind the rocky mound

Loiter'd, like men who stand in idle mood :

And one, who seem'd by weariness oppress'd,

Was sitting with his arms his knees around,

Between them bending down his head to rest.





Unless by prayer a speedier aid be given 133

From hearts which grace divine hath visited :

What other prayer avails—unheard in Heaven ?”

The poet now was climbing up the height

Before me :—“ Haste thy steps ;—the sun,” he said,

“ Strikes the meridian ; and already night

Over Marocco's coast her foot hath spread.”

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# **PURGATORY.**



## **CANTO V.**

#### ARGUMENT.

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DANTE is reproved by Virgil, for attending to the whispers of the spirits who wonder at his casting a shadow.—A troop arrive, singing the Miserere. Having delayed repentance till overtaken by a violent death, they were graciously allowed to make their peace with God. Buonconte da Montefeltro. Pia.

## PURGATORY.

---

### CANTO V.

FOLLOWING the footsteps of my faithful guide                    1  
Those souls I now had left, when in the rear  
One, with his finger pointing to me, cried :  
“ See how his form obstructs the solar light,  
So that a shade doth to his left appear,  
As though he were indeed a living wight.”  
On hearing them, I straightway turn’d me round,                    7  
And saw their looks, first fix’d on me alone,  
Then on the shadow cast upon the ground.  
“ Why thus absorb’d,” said Virgil, “ is thy thought,  
That thou so tardily proceedest on ?  
What idle whispers here concern thee aught ?

Follow thou me, nor heed what others say ;— 13  
Be like a tower that never stoops its head,  
Bellow the tempests fiercely as they may.  
He in whose breast springs thought to thought succeeding,  
Of his intent is ever frustrated—  
The force of one the other's force impeding."  
Save that " I come," what answer could I give ?— 19  
My features slightly dyed with hue of shame,  
Which makes man worthy pardon to receive.  
Meanwhile upon our flank obliquely hung  
A band of souls, that o'er the mountain came,  
Who verse by verse the Miserere sung.  
When they observed that, as I pass'd along, 25  
My body was impervious to the ray,  
Into a long hoarse ' Oh ! ' they changed their song.  
And two, as if deputed by that band,  
Ran forward, and address'd us on our way :  
" Give us your real state to understand."  
My master answer'd them : " Ye may return, 31  
And this report to those who sent you bear ;—  
Alive is he whose form ye here discern :  
If, as I judge, they paused his shade to view,  
This answer may suffice.—Let them prepare  
To honour one who may good service do."

Never beheld I at the fall of night 37

Fly o'er the heaven so swiftly meteor's flame,

Or August's clouds, when Sol withdraws his light,

But that in shorter time around they wheel'd,

And join'd the rest :—then all to meet us came,

Like troops with slacken'd rein that scour the field.

“ Close are we press'd, and by a numerous throng,” 43

The poet said ;—“ they come to ask thy aid :

List to their prayers, but listening pass along.”

“ O soul, who in the hope of being blest

Hast with thy mortal limbs this path essay'd,”

Shouting they came,—“ awhile thy footsteps rest :

Look on our features ; and if any trace 49

Thou recognize, to earth the tidings bear :

Ah ! why this haste ? why not relax thy pace ?

By violence we all our death incurr'd ;

And sinners to our latest hour we were,

When light from Heav'n inform'd us how we err'd ;

So that, repenting and forgiving, we 55

Did make our peace with God before we died,

Who cheers us with desire his face to see.”

“ No well remembered features do I view ;—

But, O ye blessed spirits,” I replied,

“ If aught may give you pleasure I can do—

Tell me, and by the peace I seek on high, 61  
From world to world by such an escort led,—  
Tell me—and with your wish will I comply.”  
“In thy kind promises confide we all,  
Although thou swearest not,” one spirit said ;  
“Unless thy purpose want of power enthrall.  
Whence I, who speak to thee before the rest, 67  
Beseech thee, if the country e’er thou see  
’Twixt Naples and Romagna, my request  
In Fano to make known with courteous prayer,  
That orisons be offer’d up for me,  
To cleanse me of the weighty sins I bear.  
There was I born ;—but near the city built 73  
By great Antenor I received the blow,  
By which my life’s best blood was foully spilt—  
There, where I thought to have found a safe retreat :  
By him of Este the deed was done ; although  
No cause there was for enmity so great.  
Tow’rds Mira had I fled, when sore beset 79  
At Oriaco by the murderous foe,  
With those that breathe had I been number’d yet :  
But running to the marsh, in reeds and mud  
I fell entangled, and beheld the flow  
That from my veins imbued the earth with blood.”

Then spake another : “ That desire of thine, 85

Which prompts thee to ascend the mountain’s crest,

May’st thou accomplish, as thou favour mine !

Of Montefeltro was I ; and my name

Buoncontë : since Giovanna and the rest

Care not for me, I walk opprest by shame.”

Then I to him : “ What accident or force 91

From Campaldino’s plain thy body drew,

That no one ever chanced to find thy corse ?”

He answer’d : “ At the foot of Casentine

The Archiano doth its way pursue

From o’er the hermit’s seat in Apennine :—

And thither, where it ceases to retain 97

Its title, with my neck transpierced I came,

Flying on foot—my life blood on the plain.

Arriving there, all sense of vision gone,

My speech I finish’d with the Virgin’s name—

There fell ; and there remain’d my flesh alone.

The truth I tell do thou on earth repeat :— 103

God’s Angel claim’d me ; but Hell’s demon dread

Cried : ‘ Thou from Heaven ! O why my aim defeat ?

Thou robbest me of his eternal soul

For that one tear of penitence he shed ;

But what remains is under my control.’



Thou know'st how rise, collected in the air, 109  
The humid mists, which, when they mount on high,  
Are turn'd to water in those regions rare :  
These did the evil one (his will combined  
With intellect, for such strong faculty  
His nature gave) stir up, disturb'd by wind.  
When day had closed, from Pratomagno thence 115  
To Apennine, with vapours dark as pitch  
He fill'd the vale, and made the heav'n so dense,  
That the o'erburden'd air was turn'd to rain :  
Copious it fell, and into many a ditch  
Ran what the sated earth could not contain.  
And to great streams as lesser bend their course, 121  
So to the royal river onward dash'd  
The impetuous flood, that nought could check its force.  
Cast at his mouth the impetuous Archian found  
My frozen corpse, and into Arno wash'd ;  
And from my breast that hallow'd cross unbound,  
Which, rack'd with pain, I of my arms had made. 127  
Whirl'd was I then its sides and depths among,  
Till o'er me were its furtive treasures laid."  
" Ah ! when, to earth restored, thou shalt repose  
From all the labours of thy journey long,"  
Said a third voice, which gently then arose,

“ Me, who am Pia, to remembrance bring ;  
Sienna bore me ; and Maremma slew ;—  
He who, on marrying me, a golden ring  
Placed on my finger, knows that this is true.”

133



# **PURGATORY.**



## **CANTO VI.**

#### ARGUMENT.

---

DANTE is solicited by numerous shades to obtain for them the prayers of their friends when he returns to this world.—Sordello the Mantuan, sitting alone, proud and disdainful. His affectionate manner to Virgil, on finding he was his countryman. Dante breaks forth into an apostrophe against the unnatural quarrels of the Italians.

## PURGATORY.

---

### CANTO VI.

WHEN players from the game of dice depart, 1  
He who hath lost remains of sorrowing mind,  
His throws repeating as he learns the art :—  
The crowd pursues the winner of the game ;  
One goes before, one twitches him behind,  
One at his side doth old acquaintance claim :—  
He stays not ; but to some an ear he lends, 7  
To some a hand :—these instant yield their place ;  
And from the crowd he thus himself defends.  
Such was my state amid that numerous crew,  
As oft on either side I turn'd my face,  
And with fair promises from them withdrew.

- He of Arezzo, who the mortal blow 13  
Received from Ghino's arm, there met my view ;  
He also, who, while following his foc,  
Was whelm'd in Arno :—there Novello pray'd  
With hands uplifted ;—he of Pisa too,  
Who good Marzucco's fortitude display'd.  
There I beheld Count Orso ; and that shade 19  
By wrath and envy from his body rent,  
And not through crime committed, as was said :  
Pier de la Brosse I mean ; and let beware  
The dame of Brabant now while life is lent,  
Lest to a flock more sinful she repair.  
When I from all these spirits had been freed, 25  
Who pray'd they might obtain the prayers of man,  
Their progress to a blessed state to speed ;—  
“ O thou my light ! thy text, it seems, hath given  
Denial to the doctrine,” I began,  
“ That prayers can alter the decrees of Heaven :  
Yet such the faith these spirits entertain. 31  
Will all their hopes then prove of no avail ?  
Or is thy writing not to me made plain ?”  
“ Plain is my writing,” straightway he rejoin'd,  
“ Nor will their cherish'd expectations fail,  
If thou consider with a thoughtful mind :

For Judgment stoops not from His lofty seat, 37

Though love's warm flame, in one short moment, may  
That ransom work these should themselves complete.

Moreover, where I wrote that maxim—there

No crime by praying could be wash'd away,  
Since from the Almighty was disjoin'd their prayer.

But on my answer do not thou rely, 43

Unless confirmed by Her who is the light  
That shines between the truth and mental eye.

Know'st thou my meaning? Beatrice I mean ;—

She, blest and joyous, on the verdant height  
Of this fair mountain shall by thee be seen."

" Let us proceed," I said, " with greater haste ; 49

For not, as erst, am I fatigued ; and lo !  
Already doth the mount a shadow cast."

" We shall advance before the evening close,

Far as we can," he answer'd me ; " but know,  
The mountain's form is not what you suppose.

Ere to the summit we have won our way 55

Shall re-appear that glorious orb of light,  
Which now behind the hill conceals his ray.

But see a spirit sitting there alone,

And lonely, who to us directs his sight ;  
The shortest passage will by him be shown."

To him advanc'd we.—What disdain and pride, 61  
O Lombard soul ! thy countenance bespoke !  
Thine eyes, how mov'd they, slow and dignified !  
To us the spirit not a word address'd,—  
And let us pass him—deigning but a look,  
Like to a lion when he takes his rest.  
Yet Virgil, tow'rds him still advancing on, 67  
Pray'd him to show how up the mountain side  
We best might speed :—reply vouchsafed he none ;  
But of our country and our life he straight  
Enquir'd ; and when began my gentle guide,  
“ Mantua,”—the spirit, so abstracted late,  
Sprang tow'rds him from his resting place in haste, 73  
Crying, “ O Mantuan, from thy land am I,  
Sordello : ”—one the other then embraced.  
Ah, servile Italy ! abode of woe !  
Bark without pilot in a stormy sky !  
Queen once of fair domains—how fallen now !—  
With such warm zeal that noble spirit came, 79  
A welcome to his countryman to pay,  
But for the sweet sound of his country's name ;—  
While now thy living ones are constant foes,  
And each one gnaws the other—even they  
Whom the same foss, the self-same walls enclose.



Search, wretched one ! thy sea girt shores around ; 85

Then inward turn to thine own breast ; and see

If any part in joyous peace be found.

What boots it that Justinian's skill replaced

The bit, if empty now the saddle be ?—

Without it thou had'st been far less disgraced.

Ah ye ! who should to things divine be given, 91

And let Augustus in his saddle sit,

(If ye had listen'd to the voice of Heaven)—

Look how the beast, refusing all command,

For want of spurs obeyeth not the bit,

Since to the bridle ye have put your hand.

O Austrian Albert ! who desertest her, 97

(Ungovernable now and savage grown)

When most she needed pressing with the spur—

May on thy race Heav'n's righteous judgment fall ;

And be it signally and plainly shown,

With terror thy successor to appal !

Since by thy lust yon distant lands to gain, 103

Thou and thy sire have suffer'd wild to run

What was the garden of thy fair domain.

Come, see the Capulets and Montagues—

Monaldi—Filippeschi, reckless one !

These now in fear—already wretched those.

- Come, cruel one ! and see what ills endure 109  
Thy nobles, and avenge their injuries ;  
And see if Santafore be secure.
- Come, and behold thy Rome, how she doth mourn :  
A lonely widow, day and night she cries :  
“ When will my Cæsar to my arms return ? ”
- Come, and behold thy people, how they love ! 115  
And if no pity our distress inspire,  
Let blushes for thy fame compassion move.
- O Thou whose blood for us redemption earn'd,  
Say, (if for me 'tis lawful to enquire)  
Are Thy just eyes, indignant, elsewhere turn'd ?
- Or is it with a view to some good end 121  
Determin'd in thy counsel's deep abyss,  
Beyond what we have power to comprehend—  
That full of tyrants is Italia's land ;  
And a Marcellus straight accounted is  
Each peasant vile that wields a factious brand ?
- My Florence ! well contented may'st thou be 127  
With this digression—thee it toucheth not ;  
Thanks to the people who advise for thee !  
Many have justice in their hearts ; but long  
Delay, through fear, the meditated shot ;—  
Thy people have it on the very tongue.

Many refuse the burdens of the state ;— 133  
Thy people answer with officious haste  
Ere they are asked : “ I bow me to the weight.”  
Then be thou joyful, for good cause hast thou ;—  
Thou rich ! thou peaceful ! thou with wisdom graced !  
That I speak truth, the facts themselves avow.  
Athens and Lacedæmon, who display’d 139  
Such skill in laws, and were so polish’d too,  
In social life but slight improvement made,  
Compared to thee, who dost such schemes conceive—  
The subtle thread lasts not November through,  
That in October thou beganst to weave.  
How oft, within the time we can retrace, 145  
Hast thou thy customs changed and changed again,  
Thy laws, thy coin, and e’en thy very race !  
If thou rememberest well, and art not blind,  
Thou’lt see thyself like one distraught with pain,  
Who on her bed of down no rest can find,  
But, ever turning, seeks relief in vain.

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**PURGATORY.**



**CANTO VII.**

#### ARGUMENT.

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SORDELLO informs the poets they cannot ascend by night, and leads them to a beautiful valley, where are many illustrious spirits, who have delayed repentance to a late period. The Emperor Rodolph. Ottocar. Philip III. of France. Henry of Navarre. Peter III. of Arragon. Charles I. of Naples. Henry III. of England. William, Marquis of Montferrat.

## PURGATORY.

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### CANTO VII.

WHEN these kind greetings, made so courteously,                   1  
Had been repeated now full many a time,  
Back drew Sordello, saying : " Who are ye ?"  
" Ere yet the souls whom God decreed to save,  
(Worthy such grace) were taught this mount to climb,  
A burial to my bones Octavian gave :  
Virgil am I ;—nor lost to me is Heaven                                 7  
For any crime, but want of faith alone."  
To him this answer by my guide was given.  
Like unto one, who suddenly descries  
Something so wondrous, he exclaims anon,  
" It is—it is not :"—e'en in such surprise

- Appear'd the shade :—then down he cast his eyes ;      13  
And, turning to the bard, obeisance made,  
While round his knees he clung in reverent guise.  
“ O thou, the glory of the Latin race,”  
He said, “ by whom our tongue its force display'd !  
Pride of my native country !—tell what grace,  
What merit brings thee hither?—if to hear      19  
Thy accents I am thought deserving—say,  
Com'st thou from Hell, and from what circle there ?”  
“ Through all the circles of that realm of gloom,”  
He answer'd, “ I have hither won my way ;  
Virtue divine inspires ;—with her I come.  
Not what I did, but what I fail'd to do      25  
Snatch'd from mine eyes that Sun's exalted light  
By thee desired,—that light too late I knew.  
A place there is below, not vex'd with cries,  
But shrouded ever in the veil of night,  
Where grief obtains not utterance, save in sighs.  
With little innocents I there reside,      31  
Seized by the fangs of death in early prime,  
Ere they from human sin were purified.  
There do I dwell with those who put not on  
The three great virtues, yet, devoid of crime,  
Knew all the rest, and practised every one.

But, if thou canst, we pray thee to relate 37

Where first commences Purgatory's bound,  
That we may speedily attain the gate."

"We have no certain limits," he replied ;

"Free am I to ascend, or coast around :

Far as I may, I will become thy guide.

But lo ! already day begins to wear ; 43

And since the night forbids us to ascend,

Let us to some fair resting-place repair.

Yonder are shades far distant on our right ;

There, if it please thee, we our steps will bend ;

And their acquaintance may afford delight."

"How so ?" a spirit ask'd ;—"will he be check'd 49

By other's force, who up by night would go ?

Or be impeded by his own defect ?"

The good Sordello with his finger traced

A line upon the ground, exclaiming : "Lo !

Not after sunset could this line be pass'd.

Nought else indeed an obstacle presents 55

To one ascending, save the gloom of night,

Which clogs the will, and all success prevents.

Yet may he take by night the downward way,

And wind at pleasure round the mountain height,

While still the horizon hides the face of day."



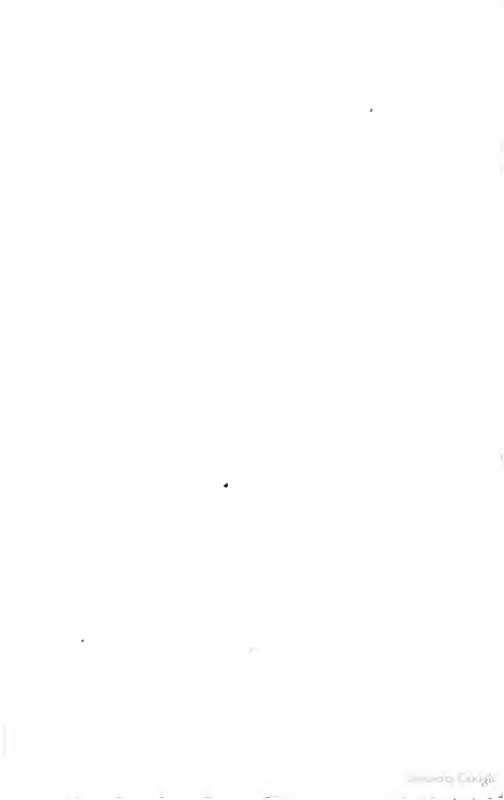
- Then said my Master, as he look'd around : 61  
    "Lead us, I pray thee, where, as thou hast said,  
    Some pleasant place of sojourn may be found."  
From thence a little distance on we went ;  
    When lo ! a hollow space the mount display'd,  
    Such as the valleys on our earth present.  
"Yonder," he said, "will we our steps direct, 67  
    Where a recess doth in the mount appear,  
    And there the dawning of the day expect."  
A path oblique along the mountain lay,  
    Which gently led us to the valley, where  
    In shelving slopes its margin dies away.  
Pure gold and silver, Indian wood serene, 73  
    Dyes that most gorgeous and refulgent are,  
    Emerald, when freshly broken it hath been,  
Would by the flowers that deck'd this fair recess  
    Have each in colour been surpass'd as far  
    As by the greater is excell'd the less.  
Her loveliest tints had Nature lavish'd there, 79  
    Nor these alone,—but from a thousand sweets  
    With unknown perfume fill'd the fragrant air.  
'Salve Regina' chaunting, met our eyen  
    Spirits, who rested on their flowery seats,  
    By those without this beauteous vale unseen.

- “ Indulge no wish among those souls to go,” 85  
    (Began the shade who pointed out the place,)  
    “ Now that the sun already sinks below,  
So soon to leave us :—from this rising ground  
    Their looks and actions thou wilt better trace  
    Than mingling with them in the vale profound.  
He who sits highest, and the semblance bears 91  
    Of having not fulfill’d his part, and who  
    Moves not his lips to join the others’ prayers,  
Was Emperor Rodolph ; who the power possess’d  
    To heal the wounds which Italy o’erthrew,—  
    Those wounds too deadly to be now redress’d.  
The other, whose kind look his grief consoles, 97  
    Ruled o’er the land whence Molta’s stream doth run,  
    Which, mixt with Albia, into ocean rolls.  
His name was Ottacar :—an infant, he  
    Was worthier than Wincelaus his son,—  
    In manhood given to ease and luxury.  
He of short nose, in counsel side by side 103  
    With him whose face is so benign and bland,  
    Disgraced the lilies, flying ere he died.  
See how impatiently he strikes his breast :  
    See how the other, sighing—on his hand  
    Hath laid his cheek, as on a bed, to rest.

The father, and the consort's father they, 109  
Of Gallia's scourge ; and this their sorrow flows,  
To think how foully lives he at this day.  
He, large of limb, in song accompanied  
By him conspicuous with projecting nose,  
With every virtue wore his girdle tied :  
And if the youth behind him had on earth 115  
Survived, and e'er succeeded to the throne,  
From sire to son had been transferr'd his worth ;  
Which none can say of both his other heirs.  
Now James and Frederick his dominions own ;  
His far more noble heritage none shares.  
But rarely human excellence doth mount 121  
Into the branches ; such the Giver's will,  
That freely His, the boon we may account.  
To Charles no less than Peter I allude ;  
And hence doth spring that fruitful source of ill,  
Which Provence and Apulia's land have rued.  
Its native vigour hath the plant so lost, 127  
That such a husband as Costanza's lord,  
Nor Beatrice, nor Margaret can boast.  
There England's Henry seated may be seen,  
Alone, enamour'd of a frugal board ;  
And in his branches happier hath he been.

He who sits lower, but who looks above, 133  
Is Marquis William, who occasion lent  
To Alexandria, that fell war to move  
The Canavese and Montferrat lament."

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# **PURGATORY.**



## **CANTO VIII.**

#### ARGUMENT.



A HYMN is sung by one of the spirits. Two Angels descend from Heaven, as guardians of the valley against the serpent. Conversation with Nino di Gallura and Conrad Malespina.

## PURGATORY.

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### CANTO VIII.

It was the hour that wakes regret anew 1  
In men at sea, and melts the heart to tears,  
The day whereon they bade sweet friends adieu;—  
And thrills the youthful pilgrim on his way  
With thoughts of love, if from afar he hears  
The vesper bell, that mourns the dying day;  
What time no more the holy strain I caught; 7  
And saw one soul uprisen among the rest,  
Who with her hand outstretch'd a hearing sought.  
She clasp'd and raised both palms, with placid brow  
Fixing her eyes intently tow'rds the east,  
As saying—"God! my only care art Thou!"



- 'Te lucis ante,' with such deep devotion 13  
Forth issued from her lips in notes so soft,  
My soul was ravish'd with intense emotion.  
Meanwhile the others, sweetly and devout,  
Keeping their eyes upon the wheels aloft,  
Accompanied her voice the hymn throughout.  
Reader! here sharpen to the truth thy sight; 19  
For unawares may'st thou transpierce the veil,  
So finely woven, and of texture slight.  
Silently gazing upward then I view'd  
That amiable band, all meek and pale,  
As though in expectation lost they stood:  
Two Angels also saw I, from on high 25  
Descending down, each with a flaming brand,  
Pointless and broken as it met mine eye.  
Green, like to new-born leaves, their garments were,  
Which, from behind by verdant pinions fann'd,  
Were struck anon, and floated in the air.  
Somewhat above us, one a station gain'd; 31  
While to the opposing bank the other cross'd;  
So that between the two the shades remain'd.  
The fairness of their hair I plainly view'd,  
But in their faces was mine eyesight lost,  
As by excess of brilliancy subdued.

“ Against the serpent, who will presently 37

Arrive, to guard the vale,” Sordello said,

“ From Mary’s bosom they proceed :”—then I,

Not knowing whence the foe might come, aside

Turn’d in alarm, and all congeal’d with dread,

Clung to the trusted shoulder of my guide.

“ To those exalted shades within the vale 43

Let us descend,” Sordello now renew’d ;

“ The sight of you they will with pleasure hail.”

Three steps sufficed to bring me down below,

When one intently eyeing me I view’d,

As though my features he desired to know.

It was the hour when night was gathering round, 49

Though not so dark as to exclude from sight

What late was shrouded in that verdant ground :—

To me he came, and I to him drew near ;

O Nino, noble Judge ! with what delight,

Safe from the abode of guilt, I saw thee here !

No greetings kind were spared on either side. 55

Then ask’d he : “ To the foot of this fair hill

When didst thou come, from o’er the distant tide ?”

I answer’d him : “ From out the realms of woe,

This morn I came, the first life breathing still,

Though striving for the second as I go.”

Soon as my answer fell upon their ear, 61  
Sordello and the spirit backward drew,  
Like persons suddenly assailed by fear.  
One turn'd to Virgil ;—one address'd a shade  
Who sat there, crying : “ Conrad, up, and view  
The grace of God here signally display'd.  
Accosting me :—“ By that great debt you owe 67  
To Him who hides from all his secret way,  
Unfordable to mortal man below—  
When thou again hast cross'd the swelling main,  
Bid my Giovanna that for me she pray  
To Him from whom the pure an answer gain.  
The love that erst to me her mother bare, 73  
Was quench'd, the day she doff'd her widow's dress,  
Which, in affliction now, she fain would wear.  
This instance doth enable us to see  
How long in woman lasts love's flame, unless  
The sight and touch relume it frequently.  
So fair a sepulture will ne'er confer 79  
The viper, which the field of Milan shows,  
As would Gallura's bird have granted her.”  
As thus he spoke, his countenance exprest  
The stamp of that indignant zeal, which glows  
With well attemper'd ardour in the breast.

On heaven meanwhile was fix'd my eager eye, 85

Where move the stars with slower impulse roll'd,

Like to those spokes which near the axle lie.

“ My son, why look'st thou up?” the guide enquired.

I answer'd : “ Those three torches to behold,

With which the pole above throughout is fired.”

Then he to me : “ The four bright stars survey'd 91

This morn by thee, have yonder sunk below,

And these thou see'st have now risen up instead.”

Him, as he spoke, Sordello nearer drew,

Exclaiming : “ There behold our dreaded foe”—

Pointing the finger to direct his view.

On that side of the little vale where stood 97

No fence, a serpent lay,—perhaps the same

Which tempted Eve to pluck the bitter food.

Among the herbs and flowers his wily track

The snake pursued, oft turning as he came

His head, and smoothing, like a beast, his back.

I saw not, and I therefore cannot tell 103

When moved those hawks celestial—but that they

Had changed their station, I discern'd full well.

Hearing their verdant pinions cleave the air,

The serpent flies :—the Angels turn away,

And to their posts with equal flight repair.

That shade, which to the Judge, when call'd, drew nigh, 109

Throughout the whole of this affray had still

Ne'er ceased to fix on me his steadfast eye.

He then began: "Sufficient wax so may

The lamp that guides thee find in thy free will,

Far as the flowery height to speed thy way;

As any certain news thou may'st relate 115

Of Valdimagra, or that country near,

Where I, in days now pass'd away, was great:

Conrado Malaspina was my name—

Sprung from the elder one:—the love I bare

To mine own race, here burns with purer flame."

"Oh, never have I seen thy land," I said; 121

"But where throughout all Europe may be found

The spot to which thy glory hath not spread?

The fame that o'er your house its lustre throws

Makes both the nobles and the land renown'd;

E'en he who ne'er was there their greatness knows.

I swear by all my hopes to mount on high— 127

The name your country won, both by the sword

And generous deeds, she doth not now belie.

Habit and nature have such grace bestow'd,

That though the world pursues a vicious lord,

Upright alone, she spurns the evil road.

Wherefore proceed, for in that couch," he said, 133  
    " Which Aries doth with his four feet impress,  
    Sev'n times shall not the sun repose his head,  
Ere the kind sentiment thou dost profess  
    Shall in thy head be fix'd with firmer nail  
    Than by the force of others' speech, unless  
The unerring course of heavenly Justice fail."

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# **PURGATORY.**

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## **CANTO IX.**

#### ARGUMENT.

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DANTE falls asleep, and sees a vision. In the mean time, he is carried up the mountain by Lucia, and finds himself at the gate of Purgatory. He intreats the Angel, sitting there, to open it,—and is admitted together with Virgil.



## PURGATORY.

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### CANTO IX.

FORTH from her lover's arms, array'd in white, 1  
The beauteous concubine of Tithon old  
Was decking her above the eastern height :—  
Shone with refulgent gems her radiant brow,  
Placed in the figure of the Scorpion cold,  
Who smiteth nations with his tail ;—and now  
Two steps of her ascent had Night attain'd, 7  
And e'en the third already droop'd its wing,  
Within the valley where we still remain'd—  
When I, who still was cumber'd with the weight  
Of Adam's flesh, lay deeply slumbering,  
Where on the grass we five together sate.

- What time the swallow pours her plaintive strain, 13  
Saluting the approach of morning grey,  
Thus haply mindful of her former pain;  
And when the spirit roves with highest flight  
Beyond its earthly tenement of clay;  
Viewing the future with prophetic sight,  
Caught in a vision, seem'd I to behold 19  
An eagle in the sky with open wing,  
Prepared to stoop—his plumes of radiant gold;  
And in that very spot I seem'd to be,  
Whence Ganymede, his friends abandoning,  
Was snatch'd to Heaven's most high consistory.  
“ Here,” I bethought me, “ he perhaps is wont 25  
To strike his prey—perhaps disdaineth he  
From other place with burden'd claw to mount.”  
Then, having wheel'd around in many a spire,  
He swoop'd like lightning, terrible to see,  
And bore me upward to the sphere of fire.  
There, as it seem'd, we both were wrapt in flame; 31  
And that imagin'd fire so fiercely burn'd,  
It broke my sleep, swift darting through my frame.  
As erst Achilles started in dismay,  
Around him when his waken'd eyes he turn'd,  
Unable to discover where he lay,

From Chiron when his mother in her arms 37

To Scyros' isle convey'd him, as he slept,

Whence the Greeks summon'd him to war's alarms ;

E'en so I started, when my slumber fled :

A death-like paleness o'er my features crept,

As when the blood is changed to ice through dread.

My Comforter alone was at my side ; 43

Two hours and more the sun in heav'n rode high,

And I had turn'd me tow'rd's the ocean tide ;

When said my lord : " Fear not, securely stand ;

For know that we a goodly place are nigh ;

Relax not, but thy every force expand.

Now art thou near to Purgatory :—lo, 49

There is the ledge which circles it around ;

And there the entrance, which that cleft doth show.

Ere the first streak that tells the approach of morn,

When as thy spirit was in slumber bound,

Amid the flowers which that fair vale adorn,

A lady came, and ' I am Lucia,' said : 55

' Him who is sleeping let me bear away,

That in his journey I may give him aid.'

Sordello and those gentle forms remain'd :

Thee she took up ; and soon as broke the day,

While I pursued her, she this summit gain'd.

- She laid thee here ; and when her eyes all bright      61  
    Had pointed out the open gate to me,  
    Together with thy sleep, she took her flight."  
Like to a man whose doubts are solved—his fear  
    For comfort now exchanged, as soon as he  
    The truth discovers manifest and clear—  
E'en so I changed ; and when my escort view'd      67  
    My tranquil visage, tow'nds the lofty cliff  
    He moved, and upward I his steps pursued.  
Reader, thou see'st how I exalt my theme ;  
    Wherefore with more ingenious labour if  
    I now support it, this no wonder deem.  
Arriving nearer, we a station reach      73  
    Whence at the first a cleft appear'd in view,  
    As in a wall might show a narrow breach.  
A gate I saw ; and leading to it were  
    Three steps of different hues ; a Porter too,  
    Who spake no word as yet, was station'd there.  
I saw, when frequent I had look'd again,      79  
    That on the upper step he sat—so bright,  
    My dazzled sense could not his face sustain.  
A naked falchion brandish'd he on high,  
    Which o'er us shed such overpowering light,  
    Oft as I gazed I turn'd away mine eye.

“Tell me from where ye stand what is your will?” 85

He then began ; “and tell me where your guide ?

See, lest your coming hither work you ill.”

“A heavenly lady, of these things aware,

Thus lately spake to us,” the bard replied ;

“In that direction go,—the gate is there.”

“And may she bring you to a happy end,” 91

The courteous Warder of the gate return’d ;

“Come forward then, and these our steps ascend.”

Thither we went.—The lower step was made

Of marble white, so smooth, that I discern’d

My looks, as in a polish’d glass pourtray’d.

More dark than purple was the second’s hue, 97

Fashion’d of stone, with rugged surface dry,

And crack’d throughout its length, and crossway too.

The third, heap’d up into a massy plane,

Seem’d as it were of flaming porphyry,

Red as the blood that gusheth from a vein.

On this the Angel rested both his feet, 103

While on the threshold, which appear’d to be

One rock of diamond, he maintain’d his seat.

Up the three steps I went with willing mind,

Conducted by my guide, who said to me :

“Ask humbly that the fastening he unbind.”

Devout I fell before his presence blest, 109  
And cried : " Have mercy, and the gate unbar :"  
But first I smote three times upon my breast.  
Then with his pointed sword the Angel traced  
Sev'n P.'s upon my brow, and said : " Take care,  
When enter'd in, to have them all erased."  
Ashes, or earth, when dry and gather'd new, 115  
Of the same colour with his garb would be ;  
And from beneath its folds two keys he drew.  
Silver was one, the other gold ;—the white  
He handled first ; then of the yellow key  
Such use he made as gave my heart delight.  
" Whenever there is fault in either key, 121  
So that the lock can not be lightly moved,"  
He said, " this passage may not open'd be.  
One is more precious, but with art refined,  
And perfect skill, the other's use is proved ;  
Wherefore by that the knot is disentwined.  
St. Peter gave them me ; and bade me err 127  
In opening, rather than in making fast,  
Where humble sinners earnest suit prefer.  
Now enter," he exclaim'd ; " but bear in mind,  
(Striking the sacred wicket as he pass'd)  
Return must he who casts a look behind.

When in the crooked hinges had turn'd round                   133  
    The swivels of that venerable gate,  
    Which, form'd of metal, grated with harsh sound—  
Rung not Tarpeia, nor so loudly roar'd,  
    When good Metellus yielded to his fate,  
    And the old rock was plunder'd of its hoard.  
At the first crash, intent I turn'd to hear,                   139  
    And voices mingled with the sweetest lay,  
    Chaunting "Te Deum," burst upon mine ear.  
Such rapture did that moving strain inspire,  
    As when the organ on some holy day  
    Blends with the voices of the sacred choir,  
Which now distinct are heard, now melting die away.



**PURGATORY.**



**CANTO X.**

**N**



#### ARGUMENT.



THE gate of Purgatory. The first circle is assigned to the punishment of the proud. In the white marble rock are sculptured stories of persons eminent for humility. A troop of spirits arrive, who, bent to the ground under the weight of great stones, are expiating their pride.

## PURGATORY.

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### CANTO X.

ENTER'D within the threshold of that gate, 1  
Of which depraved affection mars the use,  
Making the crooked path appear the straight—  
I heard it shut behind me with loud sound ;  
And had mine eyes look'd back, oh ! what excuse  
Had worthy of so great a fault been found ?  
Up through a hollow way we urged our feet, 7  
Girt by the shifting rocks on either side,  
Like waves that now advance and now retreat.  
“ No little diligence it will require,”  
Exclaim'd the bard, “ our wary feet to guide,  
As here or there the massive walls retire.”

So slow our steps, as thus with care we tread, 13  
The moon already with diminish'd round  
Had sunk to rest within her briny bed,  
Ere we emerged from out that narrow track.  
But when we freely stood on open ground,  
Where the contracted mountain falleth back,—  
I, wearied out—both doubtful of our way, 19  
Halted upon a solitary plain  
Lonelier than ever path through desert lay.  
Its width, from where it to the void extends,  
Three times the human stature might attain,  
Measured to where the lofty steep ascends.  
And far as could mine eyesight wing its aim, 25  
First to the right, then to the other flank,  
This ledge appear'd to be in width the same.  
To walk thereon we had not yet essay'd,  
When I perceived that the surrounding bank,  
Which all attempt to scale its sides forbade,  
Was marble white,—with sculpture so adorn'd, 31  
Not only Polyclete, but Nature too  
Had felt her talents and her beauty scorn'd.  
The Angel who glad tidings brought to man  
Of that long wept for peace, which open threw  
The gates of heaven, and brake the ancient ban,

So sculptured to the full reality, 37

In sweetest attitude here seem'd to stand,

No silent image he appear'd to be ;—

One might have sworn that he was uttering “ Hail !”

For she was also imaged here, whose hand

Did turn the key, and with high Love prevail ;

And represented these same words in act, 43

“ Behold the handmaid of the Lord”—express,

As clearly as on wax a stamp exact.

“ Confine thy mind not to a single part,”

Said my dear lord, who kept me near his breast,

There where in living persons beats the heart.

Wherefore I turn'd mine eyes, as thus he said, 49

And saw behind the Virgin (on that side

Where stood the master who my footsteps led)

Another history on the rock impress'd :

Then drew I nearer, passing by my guide,

That it might be more clearly manifest.

In the same marble were engraven there, 55

Bearing the holy ark, the steers and wain ;

Whence man officious duties may beware.

Into sev'n choirs divided, led the way

A multitude, that made my senses twain

Declare, the one, “ they sing :” the other “ Nay.”

E'en so, the smoking incense there express'd, 61  
    Made discord rise betwixt the sight and smell,  
    And "yes" and "no" alternate sway'd my breast.  
Before the holy vessel might one see  
    The Psalmist dancing, as the Scriptures tell :  
    And more than king, yet less that hour was he.  
Forth from the palace window where she stood, 67  
    Was Michal represented looking on ;  
    Like lady in disdainful, angry mood.  
Behind her, shining in the marble white,  
    Another image my attention won ;  
    Whereat I moved to gain a nearer sight.  
Here was set forth in all his majesty 73  
    That Roman prince, whose noble act impell'd  
    Saint Gregory to his mighty victory :—  
'Trajan I speak of, gloriously pourtray'd ;—  
    And there his horse's rein a widow held,  
    In garb of misery and tears array'd.  
And round about him flock'd full many a knight ; 79  
    High o'er whose heads throughout the extended plain  
    Waved in the wind the golden eagles bright.  
'Mid these, the sorrowing lady seem'd to say :  
    " O king, avenge me, for my son is slain,  
    And grief at heart consumes my life away."

- And he appear'd to answer her : " Then wait                    85  
Till I return ;" and she : " O king, (as one  
Impatient render'd by her hapless fate)  
But shouldst thou not return ?"—" My heir," said he,  
" Will give thee aid ;" and she : " Thy part undone,  
What will the deeds of others profit thee ?"  
" Console thee, now," he said ; " for it is meet,                    91  
Ere I depart, my duty I fulfil ;  
So Justice bids, and Pity stays my feet."  
He, in whose sight can nothing new appear,  
Wrought in the rock this speaking visible,  
Wondrous to us, because not met with here.  
Whilst I contemplated with fond delight                    97  
These forms with such humility endow'd,  
And, for their Maker, precious to my sight ;  
The poet whisper'd :—" Lo ! this way proceed,  
Slowly advancing on, a numerous crowd ;  
These to the lofty steps our way will lead."  
Mine eyes, which now were earnestly intent                    103  
On viewing novel things, that please them well,  
Soon as I heard his voice, tow'rd him were bent.  
Yet, O my reader, shrink not in dismay  
From good designs, by listening as I tell,  
The mode in which God wills our debts we pay.

- Dwell not upon the torment ;—rather weigh 109  
The future ; and reflect—these sufferings dire  
May not at worst outlive the judgment day.  
“ The forms that are advancing,” I began,  
“ Far as my baffled sight can guess, O sire,  
Bear surely no similitude to man.”  
He answer'd me : “ The hardships of their fate 115  
To earth so closely weigh these spirits down,  
E'en I at first could scarce discern their state.  
But try to unravel with observance keen  
What is approaching under every stone ;  
How each is crouching low may now be seen.”  
O haughty Christians ! wretched, weary race ! 121  
Who seeing darkly with the mental eye,  
Upon your backward steps reliance place ;—  
Perceive ye not that grovelling worms ye are,  
Born to become the angelic butterfly,  
Which, unrestrain'd, to justice doth repair ?  
Wherefore do ye so loftily aspire ? 127  
Insects ye are, made but imperfectly,  
Like worms in embryo, not of form entire.  
As to support a roof or ceiling, oft  
A figure doth a bracket's place supply,  
The knees upgather'd to the breast aloft,

The unreal pain excites compassion true 134

In him who sees it ; such, when I explore

These forms minutely, they appear to view.

They were contracted either more or less,

According to the burden that they bore ;

And he who most of patience did possess,

Seem'd, weeping, to exclaim, " I can no more."





**PURGATORY.**

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**CANTO XI.**

#### ARGUMENT.

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A PARAPHRASE of the Lord's prayer, supposed to be sung by the spirits. Virgil enquires the way, and is answered by Umberto. Oderisi d'Agobbio, the illuminator. Salvani of Provence.

## PURGATORY.

" O THOU our Father who dost dwell in heaven, 1

- Our daily manna give us day by day ; 13  
If that be wanting, in this desert rude,  
He backward goes, who most would speed his way.  
As we forgive the wrongs that we receive  
At others' hands—do Thou benign and good  
Weigh not our imperfections—but, forgive.  
Risk not the virtue of a race so frail 19  
In struggle with our old inveterate foe ;  
But Thou deliver when his shafts assail.  
Not for ourselves, dear Lord, (we have no need)  
Do the last words of this petition flow ;—  
For those we left on earth we intercede."  
For them and us so praying fair success, 25  
Those shades were journeying on beneath the weight  
Like that which often doth in dreams oppress ;—  
All rack'd with varied suffering, as they go  
Round the first cornice, weary of their fate,  
Purging the gloom contracted here below.  
If then for us they offer ceaseless prayer, 31  
What should be done, their kindness to requite,  
By those on earth who Heaven's high favour share ?  
To wash away the stains collected here  
'Tis meet we give them aid ; that pure and light  
They may ascend unto the starry sphere.

“ Ah! so may justice, so may pity ease 37

Your burdens soon, that ye may spread anon

Your wings to bear you wheresoe'er ye please—

As ye direct how we the stair may reach

Most speedily,—or if more ways than one,

The easiest of ascent we pray you teach :

For this my comrade, owing to the weight 43

Of Adam's flesh, with which he still is clad,

Mounts spite his better will at tardy rate.”

Words straight were heard to answer the request

Thus by my faithful escort gently made,

Though who pronounc'd them was not manifest ;

But this was said : “ Now follow on the right 49

Along the ledge, and you will find such track

As may be mounted by a living wight :

And were I not impeded by the stone

Which curbs the pride of my imperious back,

And forces me to hold my visage down,

Him would I look at, who, untold his name, 55

Is still alive, if I might know his face,

And for this burden his compassion claim.

A Tuscan was my sire, of high degree,

Aldobrandeschi, of the Latin race,

Though ne'er perhaps his name was heard by thee.

- The glories of my house, and ancient birth 61  
Made me so proud and arrogant, that I,  
Forgetful of our common mother, earth,  
Look'd down with such contempt on all below  
As cost my life :—Sienna bade me die ;—  
This each one knows in Campagnatico.
- I am Omberto :—not myself alone, 67  
But all my kinsmen by their lofty pride  
Into misfortune have been also thrown.  
For such offence am I condemn'd to bear  
This heavy load, till God be satisfied :—  
What I forbore on earth, I practise here.”
- To catch these words, I stoop'd my head below ; 73  
And one of them,—but not the same who spoke,  
Turn'd him beneath the weight that made him bow,  
And recognised, and call'd me,—keeping bent  
His eye upon me with laborious look,  
As, crouching down, along with them I went.
- “ Art thou not Oderisi,” I exclaim'd, 79  
“ The honour of Agobbio and that art  
In Paris erst illumination named ?”  
“ More smiling, brother, are the sheets that bear  
The trace of Franco's hand,” he said,—“ in part  
The glory mine, but his the greater share.

I had not been thus courteous, I confess, 85

While earth was still my dwelling place—so great  
The thirst of praise that did my soul possess.

Here, of such pride the penalty is paid ;

Nor should I now be here, unless while yet  
To sin obnoxious, I to God had pray'd.

O the vain boast of human faculties ! 91

The verdure swiftly fading from on high,  
Unless dark ages presently arise !

In painting, Cimabuë thought the field

Was all his own,—now Giotto has the cry,  
And bids his predecessor's glory yield.

In letters so, one Guido hath supprest 97

The other's fame ; and haply one is living  
Destin'd to chase the twain from out their nest.

Nought but a gust of wind is worldly fame,

Now from this quarter, now from that arriving,  
And bearing with each change a different name.

Think'st thou thy glory will be less or more, 103

Whether thou'dst died among thy toys, or old  
Thou shuffle off thy mortal coil, before

A thousand years are past—a shorter space,

If 'gainst eternity its sum be told,  
Than wink of eye to orbs of slowest pace?

He labouring onward there, possessed a fame 109  
That once throughout all Tuscany resounded ;  
Sienna now scarce whispers of his name,  
There where he ruled, what time was forced to bow  
Florence' fierce rage, her high designs confounded—  
Florence, as haughty then, as abject now.  
Your fame is like the grass, whose varying hue 115  
Doth come and go—by that same sun destroy'd  
From whose warm ray its vigour first it drew."  
"Thy just discourse, with meekness," I exclaim,  
"Tempers my heart, by pride no longer buoy'd :  
But he of whom thou spakest, tell his name."  
"This, Provenzan Salvani," he replied ; 121  
"Here sent—because with grasping hands he made  
Sienna his, through overweening pride.  
Thus hath he moved—thus moves, devoid of rest,  
Since his decease ; such ransom must be paid  
By those who, too presumptuous, have transgress'd."  
"If it be true," I said, "he who delays 127  
Repentance till the close of life draws near,  
Cannot ascend, but here his doom obeys  
As long a time as he on earth remain'd,  
Unless he be relieved by friendly prayer,—  
How happens it he here admittance gain'd ?"



“ His glory at the highest”—he replied, 133

“ Free in Sienna’s market place he stood,

Throwing all fear of ridicule aside ;

And there, to save his comrade from the pain

Endured in Charles’s prison, he subdued

His soul to that which shook his every vein.

I say no more, for dark must be my speech ; 139

But soon thy neighbours shall demean them so

That thou the import of my words may’st reach :

This deed released him from the rounds below.”

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**PURGATORY.**



**CANTO XII.**

## ARGUMENT.



INSTANCES of pride engraven on the rocky pavement. Lucifer—Saul—Rehoboam. Alcmaeon. Sennacherib. Holophernes. Ilion. The poets are conducted by an Angel to the stairs which lead up into the second circle.

## PURGATORY.

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### CANTO XII.

LIKE oxen drawing in the yoke, we went, 1  
I, and that overburden'd soul a-breast,  
Long as the loved preceptor gave consent.  
But when he said—"Now leave him, and proceed,  
For both with sails and oars it here were best  
That each one, as he may, his vessel speed ;"—  
Erect, e'en like to one prepared in haste 7  
To urge his way, my person I uprear'd—  
My thoughts the while bent downward and abased.  
Then moved I on, and follow'd willingly  
My master's steps ; and even now appear'd,  
As both advanced, how light of foot were we :

When, "Bend thine eyes below," to me he said ;      13  
    "To ease thine onward journey 'twill be good  
    To explore the ground that forms thy footstep's bed."  
As, in memorial of the dead, are seen  
    Above their earthly tombs engravings rude,  
    Bearing the trace of what they once have been ;  
At sight whereof the tear oft starts anew,      19  
    When sad remembrance stings the thoughtful mind  
    With pangs felt only by the pious few ;—  
Such saw I here,—but fairer to behold,  
    As by the rules of perfect art design'd,  
    Far as the cornice did the mount enfold.  
Him, erst created noblest above all      25  
    Created beings, from the height of heaven  
    Beheld I, on one side, like lightning fall :  
On the other, lay, stretch'd ponderous o'er the ground,  
    Briareus' form, with shaft celestial riven,  
    By death's chill hand in icy fetters bound.  
There, Thymbra's God, there Pallas, Mars I view'd      31  
    In arms around their mighty Father stand—  
    Eyeing the giant limbs beside them strew'd.  
Nimrod I saw beneath his lofty tow'r,  
    As though confounded—gazing on the band,  
    Who mock'd in Sennaar's plain the Almighty power.

- O Niobe, with what o'erflowing eyes 37  
 Thee 'mid thy slaughter'd children I survey'd ;  
 Sev'n on each side the road in wretched guise !
- O Saul, what death-like hue thy features wore—  
 In mount Gilboa fall'n upon thy blade !  
 That mount by dew or rain ne'er freshen'd more.
- There saw I thee, Arachne, foolish one, 43  
 Half spider now,—distrest—upon the thread  
 Of that rich work in evil moment spun.
- O Rehoboam, not with threatening brow  
 Appears thy form ; but struck with mortal dread :  
 Ere foes pursue, a chariot bears thee now.
- Alcmæon on the rocky pavement wrought 49  
 Appear'd, what time he made his mother rue  
 The fatal ornaments so dearly bought.
- There was depicted how within the fane  
 Sennacherib's sons their swords upon him drew ;  
 And how they left him there, so foully slain.
- There were the slaughter and the carnage view'd 55  
 Which Tomyris made, when she to Cyrus said :  
 "For blood thou thirstedst—quench thy thirst with blood."
- There too was pictured the Assyrians' flight,  
 When Holophernes, their brave chief, was dead ;  
 And there the relics of the murderous fight.

- Troy I beheld in dust and ruin laid ;— 61  
O haughty Ilion, how wert thou debased,  
In woeful plight upon the rock pourtray'd !  
What mighty master of his pencil He,  
By whom such forms and attitudes were traced  
As lofty genius would with wonder see ?  
Alive the living—dead appear'd the dead ;— 67  
Nor could reality more clearly show,  
Than did the sculpture on that marble bed.  
Now swell with pride—pass on with visage high,  
Ye sons of Eve ! cast not your looks below,  
For fear your evil path ye should descry !  
Around the mount now further had we gone, 73  
And much more of his course the sun had sped,  
Than one might deem whose thoughts were not his own,  
When he, who ever watchful took the lead,  
Began with this injunction : “ Raise thy head ;  
Time is not ours thus musing to proceed.  
Lo, yonder, hastening tow'rds us on his way, 79  
An Angel comes ;—and the sixth handmaid now  
Returneth from her service on the day.  
With reverence deck thy looks, that he may deign  
His willing guidance up the mountain's brow :—  
This day, bethink thee, ne'er will shine again.”

Such admonitions from my faithful friend 85

'Gainst loss of time so oft imprest had been,

I could not fail the hint to comprehend.

The beauteous Creature now was drawing near,

In white array'd—his face all bright and sheen,

Like to the twinkling of the morning star.

His arms first opening—he his wings outspread :— 91

“Come,” he exclaimed, “behold the steps are nigh ;

Now may the ascent full easily be made.”

Few, few, alas ! obey the gracious call !—

O race of mortals, born to mount on high,

How is it at so slight a breath ye fall ?

He led us where the rock in twain was riven ; 97

Here with his pinion he my forehead beat,

Then promised a safe passage should be given.

As on the right hand—to ascend the ridge,

Where the church vieweth from its lofty seat

The well ruled state, by Rubaconte's bridge—

The daring mount is broken by the stairs 103

Made in a better and a simpler age,

Ere false accounts embarrass'd state affairs ;

So is relaxed the steepness of the bank,

Falling precipitous from the upper stage ;

But either side high rocks enclosing flank.



Broke in such sweetness, as we pass'd along, 109  
    " Blest are the poor in spirit," on mine ear,  
    Words are unequal to describe the song.  
Ah ! how unlike to these, the straits of hell !  
    By songs accompanied we enter here,—  
    There, by laments and imprecations fell.  
Now up the holy steps our way we gain ; 115  
    And far more lightly did I seem to move  
    Than when before I journeyed o'er the plain.  
" Say from what painful weight am I reliev'd,  
    Master," I cried ; " for as I wend above  
    Scarce by my senses is fatigue perceived."  
" When all the P.'s upon thy forehead traced, 121  
    Which still," he said, " though less distinct, remain,  
    Shall, like the one, be thoroughly effaced,  
A zeal so ardent shall thy feet excite,  
    They shall not only no fatigue sustain,  
    But bear thee upward with intense delight."  
Then was I like to one who goes along 127  
    With something on his head, he knows not what,  
    But learns from others' nods there's something wrong ;  
Wherefore he lifts his hand to ascertain,  
    And seeks, and finds ; and thus his hand hath wrought  
    That service which the eye attempts in vain :

And with my right hand's open fingers now

133

Six only of the letters could I trace

He of the keys had graven on my brow ;

Whereat a smile came o'er the master's face.



# **PURGATORY.**



## **CANTO XIII.**

### ARGUMENT.



THE second circle. The sin of Envy is here punished. Examples of Charity recounted by invisible spirits. The envious appear, clothed in sackcloth, and having their eyes sown up with an iron thread.—Sapia, a Sieunese lady.

## PURGATORY.

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### CANTO XIII.

Now had we gain'd the summit of the stairs, 1  
There where a second belt the steep divides,  
Ascending which each soul its loss repairs.  
Around the mountain doth a cornice wind,  
Like to the first that compasses its sides,  
Save in its circuit, which is more confined.  
Nor sculpture here nor image met our view ; 7  
So smooth the bank and pathway did appear,  
That like the rock was of a livid hue.  
“ If we remain till spirits come this way,  
Of whom to enquire,” the poet said, “ I fear  
We may perchance too long our choice delay.”

- Then on the sun intent he fix'd his sight, 13  
And wheeling his left shoulder to one side,  
As on a pivot turn'd upon the right.  
" O friendly planet, by whose aid," he said,  
" I enter this new path, be thou our guide :—  
By thee all entering here would fain be led.  
From thee the world receiveth light and heat ; 19  
Unless by some necessity impeded,  
Thy genial rays should ever guide our feet."  
The distance that on earth we call a mile,  
Already in short space had we proceeded—  
Our will so prompt the journey to beguile—  
When spirits flying to us from above, 25  
Heard, but unseen, invited us to taste  
The hallow'd banquet of celestial love.  
The first voice that athwart us flying came,  
Exclaim'd aloud : " They have no wine ;" then pass'd  
Behind, reiterating still the same.  
And ere these strains in distance died away, 31  
" I am Orestes"—whirling by, we heard  
Another cry ;—nor made he aught delay.  
" O father," I exclaim'd, " what voices these ?"  
And as I made enquiry—lo, a third  
Distinctly utter'd : " Love your enemies."

- “ Within this circle,” said my guide, “ is felt                    37  
The lash that envy is condemn’d to bear ;  
Therefore its cords by love’s mild hand are dealt :  
The bit is wont to sound in other strain ;  
As I imagine thou thyself wilt hear,  
Before the pass of pardon we attain.  
But through the air attentive stretch thine eye ;                    43  
And, seated in our front, full many a shade  
Along the mountain’s side wilt thou descry.”  
Mine eyes I open’d for an ampler view,  
And in advance, saw shades in mantles clad,  
The livid rock resembling in their hue.  
A little further on, these words I heard :                    49  
“ O Mary, Michael, Peter, who Heaven’s throne  
Encircle—be your prayers for us preferr’d.”  
Walks not a man on earth this day, I ween,  
So hard of heart, but that he must have shown  
Some touch of pity for what there was seen :  
For tow’rds them when I had approach’d so near                    55  
That e’en their attitudes were plainly shown,  
Mine eyes stream’d forth with many a bitter tear.  
Of sackcloth vile their covering seem’d to be ;  
One on another’s shoulder bent him down ;  
And on the rock all leant dejectedly.

- Not otherwise the blind, in want of bread, 61  
Stand in the churches to implore relief;  
And one against his neighbour rests his head,  
To raise compassion in the stranger's heart ;  
For witnessing, no less than hearing grief  
Pierces the bosom with a poignant dart.  
And as the sun doth ne'er the blind illume ; 67  
Thus, to the shades of whom I now discourse,  
The light of Heaven ne'er dissipates the gloom.  
The lids of all an iron thread doth pierce,  
Sewing them up, e'en as a hawk's perforce  
Is sewn, to make the savage bird less fierce.  
To me it seem'd a want of courtesy, 73  
Unseen myself, on others' face to gaze ;  
Whereat I turn'd to my instructor :—he  
The silent wishes of my heart well knew ;  
And waiting not till I my voice could raise,  
Said : " Speak to them, and let thy words be few."  
(Virgil had come unto me from the bound 79  
Of the outer ledge, whence one may fall below  
Because no rampart there is carried round :—  
Stood on the other hand the shades devout,  
Who by the horrid seam were tortured so  
That o'er their cheeks the bitter tears gush'd out :)



- Turning around, "O spirits," I exclaim, 85  
    "Now certain that exalted Light to see,  
    The one sole object of your longing aim,—  
So from your conscience may the grace of Heaven  
    Dispel the scum, that thus a channel free  
    May to the river of your mind be given,—  
As you inform me what I long to know— 91  
    If any Latian soul may here be seen ;  
    Haply to him may some advantage flow."  
"We all, my brother, of one city true  
    Are denizens ; but surely thou must mean  
    One who in Italy did erst pursue  
His pilgrimage." These words I seem'd to hear 97  
    Somewhat advanced from where I tarried now.—  
    To listen better I approach'd more near,  
And saw amid the rest a shade, that gazed,  
    As if expectant :—if one ask me, "How ?"  
    Like one deprived of sight her chin she raised.  
"O thou," I said, "who dost thy spirit tame 103  
    To mount above ;—if thou that answer gave,  
    Inform me who thou art by place or name."  
"Know," she replied, "a Siennese was I ;  
    And, praying God my guilty soul to save,  
    Here wash away my life's iniquity.

Sapia my name, though Sapience mark'd me not ;      109  
And more delight I took in others' sadness  
Than in the happiness that bless'd my lot.  
And lest my words deceit should seem intending,  
Hear, if I was not foolish, e'en to madness :—  
When down the arch my years were now descending,  
My citizens, assembled in the field      115  
Near Collè, were prepared their foes to meet ;  
And I pray'd God they might be forced to yield :  
There routed, were they turn'd to bitter flight ;  
And I, who stood to witness their defeat,  
Indulged in warmest transports of delight ;  
And upward turn'd my daring visage,—crying      121  
To Heav'n in joy : " I fear thee now no more ;"  
As cried the thrush, one transient gleam espying.  
Upon the brink of life, I wish'd to effect  
My peace with God ; but, though repenting sore,  
Still had I suffer'd for my dire neglect,  
Had not Pier Pettinagno kindly thought      127  
In his most holy orisons of me,  
And by his charity deliverance wrought.  
But who art thou, who journeying onward seekest  
To know our state, and hast thine eyelids free,  
As I believe thou hast, and breathing, speakest ?"

“ Mine eyes,” I said, “ may here be reft of sight— 133

But for short time ;—the penalty they owe  
For envious looks indulged in, is but slight.

Far greater dread my anxious soul doth own,  
Of the infliction to be borne below ;  
And even now that burden weighs me down.”

And she to me : “ Inform me who thy guide, 139  
If thither to return thou dost expect.”

“ Yon silent spirit brought me,” I replied ;  
“ And I am living ; therefore ask of me,  
If thou desire that I, O spirit elect !  
Should move on earth my mortal feet for thee.”

“ O such a novel thing is this to hear,” 145

She said, “ it greatly proves God’s love to thee ;  
Wherefore sometimes assist me with thy prayer ;  
And by whatever be thy dearest aim,

If e’er thou tread the soil of Tuscany,  
I prithee with my kindred clear my fame.

Them wilt thou see amidst that silly race 151

Whose hopes in Talamon will prove more vain  
Than those fond hopes they did in Dian place :  
Still more their baffled Admirals shall complain.

# **PURGATORY.**



## **CANTO XIV.**

## ARGUMENT.



DIALOGUE between Guido del Duca of Brettinoro, and Rinieri da Calboli of Romagna. The latter inveighs against the vice and degeneracy of all who live in the vale of Arno. Voices are heard recording instances of envy.

## PURGATORY.

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### CANTO XIV.

- “WHO is the man that winds around our hill 1  
Ere death has set his soul at liberty—  
Opening his eyes and closing them at will?”  
“I know him not ; but know he’s not alone ;—  
Ask who he is thyself, for thou art nigh ;  
And move him to discourse with gentle tone.”  
Bent tow’rds each other, held such colloquy 7  
Concerning me, two spirits on the right ;  
Then upward raised their looks to speak to me :  
“O soul,” one said, “that, in thy mortal clay  
Enveloped still, dost take thy heavenward flight—  
In charity console us ; and, O say,

Whence comest thou, and what thy name ;—for we 13

So greatly marvel at this signal grace,

As at some strange unheard of prodigy."

And I: "Through Tuscany a streamlet flows

From Falterona's height, which runs its race

Some forty leagues before it finds repose ;—

From its vicinity I drag this frame : 19

To tell thee who I am would be in vain,

So little yet on earth resounds my name."

"Sure, if my intellect embody well

Thy purposed meaning," (he who first began

Then answer'd me) "thou wouldst of Arno tell."

"But why did he conceal," the other said, 25

"That river's title ; as a man forsooth

Abstains from uttering aught of import dread ?"

The shade who thus was questioned, made reply :

"The cause I know not ; but I know in truth,—

Full well that valley's name deserves to die :

For from its source, (there where so frequent teems 31

The lofty range, whence is Pelorus riven,

That but few places so abound in streams,)

E'en to the spot where it restores again

The vapours that the ocean lends to heaven,

(Whence rivers their renew'd supplies obtain)

From virtue, all, as from a serpent fly ; 37

Whether through influence of a noxious clime,  
Or through ill habit's strong necessity :

Whence are the dwellers in that wretched vale  
So changed from what they were in olden time,  
'Twould seem they batten'd within Circe's pale.

'Mid filthy swine, deserving more to feed 43

On acorns than such food as man prepares,  
This brook at first his abject course doth lead.

Then lower down, 'mong curs condemn'd to stray,  
Gripping with spite, were power of mischief their's,  
From them he turns his scornful snout away.

This foss, most hapless, most accurst—the more 49

Its waters fall, with fuller current running,  
Of dogs, becoming wolves, finds greater store.

Descending onward then in deeper streams,  
It finds the foxes, so replete with cunning,  
They fear not to be baffled in their schemes.

Yet will I speak, although another hear, 55

Who well may let into his memory sink  
What a true spirit doth to me declare.—

Already doth thy Grandson meet my sight:—

A hunter of those wolves upon the brink  
Of the fell stream, he scatters all in flight.



- Their flesh he bartereth while yet alive, 61  
Then slays them like an aged ox :—as these  
Of life, himself of fame doth he deprive.  
Blood-stain'd he issues from the mournful wood,  
And leaves it such, that in ten centuries  
Its pristine vigour may not be renew'd.”  
As, at the announcement of impending woe, 67  
The face of him who listens is perplex'd,  
In wonder whence will come the threaten'd blow ;  
So the other soul, who stood in act to hear,  
I saw in countenance perturb'd and vex'd,  
Soon as these words had fall'n upon his ear.  
The speech of one, the other's troubled air 73  
Fill'd me with eagerness their names to know ;  
And I the inquiry made with earnest prayer.  
At which the soul that first accosted me,  
Resumed : “ What I in vain ask'd thee to do,  
That thou desirest I should do for thee.  
But since God wills to manifest so bright 79  
His grace in thee, I will not say thee nay ;  
Guido del Duca know then am I hight.  
My blood was so consumed by envy's flame,  
That if I but beheld another gay,  
A livid hue o'er all my features came :

Such crop I gather from the seed I sow'd. 85

O race of man! your hopes why fix ye there,  
Where none may be partakers of your good?

This is Rinier, the honor and the pride

Of the great house of Calboli, whose heir  
No image of his valour hath supplied.

Nor his the only blood betwixt the Po, 91

The Rhine, the mountain, and the rolling main,  
Reft of the good which truth and taste bestow.

For all the land within this boundary

Is fill'd with stocks so poisonous, that in vain  
Might man long time the force of culture try.

Where is Manardi now, and where the good 97

Licio and Traversaro, Guido great?

Oh, how degenerate is Romagna's blood!

When in Bologna doth a Fabbro shoot,

A Bernardin rule o'er Faenza's state,—

A generous offset from a lowly root?

Wonder not, Tuscan, at my grieving thus, 103

When Ugolino to my mind I call,

And Guido, wont to lead his life with us,—

Frederick Tegnoso and his worthy race,

The Traversari, Anastagi (all

Now disinherited of ancient grace),

- The dames, the knights, the labour and the ease      109  
    That wooed us on to love and courtesy,  
    Where rancorous envy now all hearts doth seize.
- O Brettinoro! why not get thee gone,  
    Now that thy family have quitted thee,  
    And many, to avoid contagion, flown?
- Well doth Bagnacaval not to renew      115  
    His line ;—ill Castrocaro, Conio worse,  
    Begetting Counts, a still more worthless crew.
- And well shall also the Pagani fare,  
    What time the Demon dies, their country's curse,  
    Though proof be wanting of what once they were.
- O Ugolin of Fantoli!—thy name      121  
    May rest secure, since thou hast none to impeach  
    By deeds of baseness thy unsullied fame.
- But now, O Tuscan, leave me ; for I take  
    Greater delight in weeping than in speech,  
    So deeply grieve I for our country's sake."
- We were aware those friendly spirits heard      127  
    Our parting steps ; and that we need not fear  
    Advancing, from their silence we inferr'd.
- Alone we were proceeding on our way,  
    When, like to lightning as it cleaves the air,  
    A voice approaching us was heard to say :

“ By him who findeth me shall I be slain ;” 133

Then, as when sudden breaks the o'erladen cloud,

The thunder rolls, that spirit fled amain.

Our ears short respite had obtain'd, when burst

Another voice anon with crash as loud

As when a second clap succeeds the first :—

“ I am Aglauros, who was turn'd to stone.” 139

Whereat, that to the bard I might be near,

I drew me back instead of venturing on.

Now was the air throughout that region still,

When thus he said : “ That was the curb severe

Which ever should restrain man's evil will.

But ye are tempted by the specious lure 145

Drawn by the hook of the old Enemy ;

Nor bit nor call avails to work a cure.

Heaven calls you, and on every side displays

Its everlasting beauties ; but your eye

Still fixes upon earth its longing gaze ;

Wherefore He smites you who doth all descry.”

# **PURGATORY.**



## **CANTO XV.**

#### ARGUMENT.



DISCOURSE upon Envy. Virgil explains to Dante the difference between earthly and heavenly goods;—the former admitting not participation—the latter increasing by it. Hence Charity in heaven unbounded. The third circle, in which Anger is punished. Instances of forbearance. St. Stephen, &c. A dense fog comes on.

## PURGATORY.

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### CANTO XV.

As much as, tracing from the third hour's close 1  
Till earliest dawn, appeareth of that sphere  
Which like a playful child no quiet knows—  
So long a course the sun's declining light  
Had still to traverse :—it was evening here,  
But upon earth the very noon of night.  
His beams assail'd us full upon the brow ; 7  
For by such rounds the mount was travell'd o'er,  
That tow'rd's the sunset we were moving now ;  
When I my forehead felt opprest with glare  
Of dazzling light, far brighter than before ;  
And stupor seized me from effect so rare.

- My hands I raised to guard my aching sight, 13  
And o'er my forehead held them up, to hide  
The overpowering effluence of light.  
As when from water or a glass, the ray  
Bounds from below unto the opposing side,  
Ascending upward in the self-same way  
That it descended,—equi-distant too 19  
From the right line a stone would take, impell'd  
Through the same space, as science shows is true ;  
So, as it seem'd, by a refracted light  
Shining in front of me was I assail'd ;  
Wherefore I quickly turn'd away my sight.  
“Loved sire,” I ask'd, “what is it I discern 25  
Approaching tow'rds us, and from which mine eyes, -  
Unable to endure the splendour, turn ?”  
“Marvel not, if thou still art dazzled by  
The ministering attendants of the skies ;—  
One comes,” he said, “to summon man on high.  
These glorious sights not long shall give thee pain, 31  
But will inspire thee with as much delight  
As nature makes thee able to sustain.”  
When near we came unto the Angel blest,  
“Enter,” with joyful voice he said ; “this height  
Presents a stair far easier than the rest.



Ascending thence—behind us sang a voice : 37

“ Bless’d are the merciful,” in sweetest lay,  
“ And thou victorious one, do thou rejoice.”

Slow up the ascent were labouring on we two—

My guide and I ;—I, thinking on my way  
That from his speech some profit might accrue :

Then, turning, made I this enquiry : “ What 43

Could mean the spirit of Romagna, when  
He spoke of good, with others shared or not ?”

Then he : “ Full well he knows the cost severe

Of his besetting sin ;—no marvel then

If man he warn’d, to abate his suffering here.

Because your wishes to such objects tend 49

As are diminish’d if another share,

In envy’s full blown sighs they ever end.

But if the love of the celestial sphere

To higher objects had allured your care,

Your breasts would not be troubled by that fear.

For there the more the expression ‘ our ’ we use, 55

So much more good to each one’s lot will fall,

And greater warmth will charity diffuse.”

“ Now,” I replied, “ am I far more perplex’d

Than if thou hadst not answer’d me at all ;

And with more troublous doubts my mind is vex’d.

- How can it be, that a possession, shared 61  
By many persons, can enrich them more  
Than if the same is but on few conferr'd ?”  
Then he : “ Because thine intellectual sight  
Is wholly bent earth’s objects to explore,  
Darkness thou gath’rest from the all perfect Light.  
That Good ineffable which dwells above, 67  
As ray to lucid body swift descends,  
So, in unbounded fullness speeds to love.  
The warmth it finds, the same it still bestows ;  
And wide soe’er as charity extends,  
Beyond it still the eternal virtue glows.  
The more aspirants are there of the sky, 73  
More good there is to love, and more is loved,  
As mirrors by reflection multiply.  
And if for further food thou still dost crave,  
By Beatrice shall fully be removed  
This and each other longing thou mayst have.  
Exert thee now without delay to efface, 79  
E’en as the two, each still remaining wound,  
Which due contrition soonest may erase.”  
I was about to say, “ I am content ; ”  
But paused,—when coming to another round,  
On novel sights my curious eyes were bent.

There in a lofty vision suddenly 85

Appear'd I rapt ; and lo, a multitude

Assembled in a temple met mine eye.

And with a mother's tender look, methought,

A lady cried, who on the threshold stood :

"Why, O my son, hast thou thus with us wrought ?

Behold thy sire and I full many a day 91

Have sought thee sorrowing."—Ceased her gentle strain ;

And this first vision floated swift away.

Then came in view a matron, from whose eyes

Were streaming down her cheeks such tears amain

As from indignant wrath are wont to rise.

"If of that city thou art lord," she said, 97

"Whose name caused discord 'mid the heav'nly race,

And where each science doth its lustre shed,

Punish those arms that so audaciously

Presumed our virgin daughter to embrace."

Pisistratus all mildly made reply,

With look benevolent and temperate : 103

"How shall we treat the man who wills our woe,

If he who loves us meets so harsh a fate ?"—

With fury then inflamed, I saw a crowd

Stoning a youth ;—and as they struck each blow,

"Away with him, away," they cried aloud.

I saw him bow his head to earth at last, 109  
Weigh'd down in death by the o'erpowering blows ;  
But stedfast still to heaven his eyes he cast ;—  
In that dread conflict, to the Lord above  
Praying for pardon on his ruthless foes,  
With gentle look that doth to pity move.  
When to itself my mind return'd again, 115  
And on substantial things its aim could keep,  
I found my wanderings were not wholly vain.  
My guide, who witness'd my uncertain gait,  
Like his who tries to rouse himself from sleep,  
Cried: "What's the matter? canst thou not walk straight?  
Above a mile hast thou thy journey made 121  
With eyes half shut, and reeling to and fro,  
Like to a man by wine or slumber sway'd."  
"Loved sire," I said, "if thou wilt hear my tale,  
The dream I witness'd will I strive to show,  
What time my tottering limbs appear'd to fail."  
"Hadst thou a hundred masks upon thy face," 127  
He answer'd me, "yet should I never cease  
Thy most minute and secret thoughts to trace.  
What thou hast seen did gracious Heav'n bestow,  
Thy heart to open to the streams of peace  
Which from the eternal fountain ever flow.

I ask'd not ' what's the matter,' with the intent 133

Of one whose faculty of sight is gone

Soon as the soul is from the body rent ;

But I enquired, to urge thee to proceed :

Thus it behoves to spur slow loiterers on,

That when the watch returneth they may speed."

Then tow'rds the west we still pursued our way, 139

Extending as we went our ravish'd sight

Against the splendour of the evening ray ;

When lo ! approaching us, came gradually

A vapour dense and dark as blackest night ;

Nor was there shelter whither we could fly :

Our eyes were dimm'd, and all obscured the light.

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**PURGATORY.**



**CANTO XVI.**

## ARGUMENT.



PASSING through the dark smoke in which angry souls are wrapt, Dante hears voices praying to the Lamb for mercy. He reasons with one of these spirits, who explains the doctrine of free-will, and attributes the great depravity of the world to the union of temporal and spiritual authority in the person of the Pope.



## PURGATORY.

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### CANTO XVI.

NOR gloom of hell, nor shade of blackest night, 1  
    When not a star illumes the barren heaven,  
    And clouds of massy darkness block the light,  
My face e'er covered with a veil so dense  
    As did that murky smoke, around us driven,—  
    And to the touch, of sharpness so intense.  
In vain I strove to keep my eyes unclos'd ; 7  
    Whereat, my faithful escort, drawing near,  
    His shoulder to assist my steps disposed.  
As one bereft of sight behind his guide  
    Walks, lest he stray and meet some shock severe,  
    Or aught whence greater evils may betide ;

- So went I through that foul and pungent air, 13  
Listening my leader's words, who did not cease  
His warning : " How you quit my side, beware."  
Voices I heard ; and each appear'd to pray  
Unto the Lamb for pardon and for peace—  
The Lamb of God that taketh sins away ;  
And " Agnus Dei" was their prelude still. 19  
All in one measure, in one voice unite ;  
And perfect concord seem'd to rule their will.  
" Are spirits these we hear?" I then enquire.  
He gave me answer : " Thou hast guesst aright ;  
They loose the fetters of their former ire."  
" Now who art thou who through our smoky air 25  
Passest along, and speakest of our band,  
As one who still by calends counts the year?"  
Thus spake a voice ; whereat my guide : " Do thou  
Return an answer to them, and demand  
If this way leadeth to the mountain's brow."  
Then I : " Thou who dost cleanse thee, to return 31  
Pure unto Him who made thee, follow me ;  
And things of wondrous import shalt thou learn."  
" I will advance," he said, " far as I may ;  
And if the smoke permit me not to see,  
Hearing shall keep me near thee on my way."



- But what the cause I do intreat thee show, 61  
That I may understand and tell to other ;  
For one, in heaven, one places it below."  
A sigh profound he drew, by grief intense  
Forced into " Oh : "—he then began : " O brother,  
The world is blind, and sure thou comest thence.
- Ye who are living to the heavens each cause 67  
Ascribe ; as though e'en of necessity  
Moved every thing obedient to its laws.  
Which were it true, in you it would destroy  
Free-will ; and then unjustly should we see  
Woe dealt to evil, and to virtue joy.
- Your movements have their impulse first from heaven ; 73  
I say not all ;—but had I so asserted,  
To choose 'twixt good and evil light is given,  
And freedom of the will ; which in the first  
Encounter with the heavens, stands, if exerted ;  
Then conquers all if it be duly nurst.
- Though free, yet are ye subject to the sway 79  
Of higher power, that in you plants the mind,  
Which cares not starry influence to obey.  
If in the paths of error then ye rove,  
The cause is in yourselves, as ye will find ;  
And this more clearly I to thee will prove.

- Forth from His hand, who, ere it see the day, 85  
Views it delighted,—like some infant child,  
Weeping and smiling in its sportive way,  
The artless soul springs forth—not knowing aught,  
Except to turn to joy, whence it is thrill'd  
Spontaneous, by its gladsome Maker taught.  
Some trifling good, first tasted with delight, 91  
Leads it astray, and tempts it to pursue,  
Unless restrain'd or guided on aright.  
Laws needful hence, a bridle to impose—  
A ruler hence—who of the city true  
The towers at least may from afar disclose.  
Laws are there ;—but who keeps the laws in view ? 97  
For know,—the shepherd who the flock doth lead  
Parts not the hoof, although the cud he chew.  
And hence it is, the tribe who see their guide  
Aim at the good they value most, do feed  
On that alone, nor care for aught beside.  
Ill guidance, as ye plainly may descry, 103  
Hath led the world in wicked paths astray ;  
And not your nature's bad propensity.  
To Rome, which taught the ancient world good deeds,  
Two suns were wont to point the twofold way,  
That of the world, and that to God which leads.

- The one hath quench'd the other,—with the crook      109  
The sword is join'd; and scarce it need be told  
How ill the twain such combination brook,  
Since one no longer doth the other curb.  
Look to the grain, if credit thou withhold,  
For by its fruit is known each several herb.
- The country wash'd by Adice and Po      115  
For courtesy and valour once was famed,  
Ere Frederick had sustain'd his overthrow.  
Securely there may pass the villain now,  
Who dared not erst have shown his face, ashamed  
To talk with good men and confront their brow.
- Still live there three, in whom the olden time      121  
Reproves the vices of these latter days—  
And much they wish to reach a happier clime—  
Currado da Palazzo, good Gherard,  
And da Castel, who, in the Frenchman's phrase,  
Is call'd more properly the plain Lombard.      126
- Know then—Rome's Church, oppress'd by too much weight,  
Confounding the two governments, hath brought  
Herself into the mire with all her freight."  
"Marco," I said, "thy argument is good ;  
Now know I why from th' heritage 'twas thought  
Better the sons of Levi to exclude.

But who is that Gherard, who, old and sage, 133

Is left, a sample of the race gone by,  
And a reproach to this corrupted age?"

"To dupe or try me is thy speech preferr'd,  
Since, Tuscan though it be," he made reply,  
"Of good Gherard thou seem'st not to have heard.

Him by no other surname do I know, 139

Unless his daughter Gaia lendeth one ;  
God speed you, for no more with you I go.

Piercing the mist—behold the morning ray  
Already whitens :—I must hence, before  
The Angel, who is yonder, comes this way."

Thus he departed, hearing me no more.

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# **PURGATORY.**



## **CANTO XVII.**



## ARGUMENT.

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DANTE emerges from the dense mist of Anger described in the last Canto.—  
Address to Fancy. Examples of Anger. Philomela. Haman. Amata.—An  
Angel invites the poets upward to the fourth circle, where lukewarmness in  
love towards the Supreme Being is punished.

## PURGATORY.

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### CANTO XVII.

REMEMBER, reader, if thou ere hast been 1  
Caught in a mist upon an Alpine height,  
Through which, but as a mole does through his skin,  
Thine eye could pierce—how, when the thick moist shroud  
Begins to melt away, the solar light  
Feebly and faintly penetrates the cloud;  
And swift will thy imagination be 7  
To form a just conception, how the sun,  
Which now was setting, first appear'd to me.  
Thus, keeping even with my faithful guide,  
Forth from such murky cloud my way I won  
To the low shores whereon the rays had died.

- O Fancy, in whose chain we oft are bound— 13  
So lost to outward things we take no thought,  
Although a thousand trumpets clang around ;  
What moves thee, if no impulse sense bestow ?  
Light moves thee, in the clime of heaven self-wrought,  
Or by His will who sendeth it below.
- Imagination painted to my sight 19  
Her crime who was transform'd into the bird  
Excelling all that in the song delight :  
And so abstracted was my mind within,  
That from without was nothing seen or heard,  
Which had the power acceptance there to win.
- Into my lofty fancy then was shower'd 25  
One crucified, enraged and fierce to view,  
Such as in death his savage soul he pour'd.  
Round him the great Ahasuerus stood,  
Esther his wife, and Mordecai the Jew,  
In word and deed pre-eminently good.
- And as this vision of my fancy burst, 31  
Like to a bubble, which hath sudden been  
Left by the water which composed it first,  
Before my sight a youthful maid arose,  
Profusely weeping, as she cried : “ O queen,  
Whence came the wrathful wish thy life to close ?

To save Lavinia thou hast death incurr'd,  
And lost her so :—while I, O mother ! weep  
First thine, and then his fate, by thee deplored.  
As when a sudden and o'erpowering light,  
Strikes our closed eyes, and breaks upon our sleep,  
Quivering a moment ere it take its flight ;—  
So the imagined vision sank below, 43  
Soon as a splendour burst upon mine eye  
Surpassing all that on the earth we know.  
I turn'd to view the place I now had gain'd,  
When cried a voice : “ Ye here may mount on high,”  
Which from all other thought my mind restrain'd ;  
And with such eagerness inspired my breast 49  
To ascertain who it might be that spoke,  
Nought less than actual sight had given me rest.  
But as the sun our mortal ken weighs down,  
Its very radiance to itself a cloak,  
So here my visual power was overthrown.  
“ A heavenly spirit this, who up the height, 55  
Unask'd by us, would fain our journey speed,  
Veiling his presence with excess of light.  
He uses us as man himself would use ;  
For he who waits entreaty, seeing need,  
Inclines his mind already to refuse.

- Then let us not such invitation spurn, 61  
But to the mount, ere it grow dark, repair ;  
We may not afterwards, till day return.”  
Thus spake my faithful guide :—by him attended  
I turn’d my footsteps upward to a stair ;  
And ere the lowest step we had ascended,  
The movement of a wing I straight perceived, 67  
Fanning my face ;—a voice too, crying near,  
“ Blest are the peace-makers, from wrath relieved.”  
The sun’s last rays, that usher in the night,  
High o’er us now began to disappear,  
So that the stars on all sides came in sight :  
“ Why, O my virtue,” to myself I said, 73  
When I perceived my limbs could not command  
Their former strength, “ why art thou vanquished ?”  
Arriving at a landing, whence no more  
The staircase led above, we took our stand,  
Like to a ship when she hath come to shore.  
Some little time attentively I tried 79  
In this new circle to distinguish sound ;  
Then to the master turning round, I cried :  
“ O my dear Father, tell what sinful blot  
Receives atonement in the present round ;  
Though rest our feet,—thy speech, withhold it not.”

- And he to me : " The love of good, curtail'd 85  
Of its proportions, here obtains them full ;  
Here the oar plies that erst through loitering fail'd.  
But to perceive more clearly what I say,  
Direct thy thoughts to me ; and thou shalt cull  
Some fruit of goodly sort from our delay.—  
Creator nor created being e'er 91  
Was void of love, my son," did he exclaim,  
" Or natural, or mental, as is clear.  
The natural was aye from error free ;  
The other wandereth with mistaken aim,  
Or through excess, or through deficiency.  
To primal good while it directs its ken, 97  
Or secondary, keeping measure due,  
To sinful joy it cannot tend ;—but when  
To ill 'tis turn'd, or it is too intent  
Or slack some goodly object to pursue,  
'Gainst the Creator is the creature bent.  
Hence it is clear that love implants the seed 103  
Of all the virtues that your bosoms sway,  
And also of each unbecoming deed.  
Now, from the safety of the object loved  
Since love can never turn its face away,  
So from self hatred are all things removed.

- And since no one in self-existent state 109  
Lives, independent of his primal source,  
It follows clearly none that source can hate.  
This love of ill then, (if true what I say)  
Against its neighbour must direct its course,  
And in three modes is 'gender'd in your clay.  
One by his neighbour's fall aspires to be 115  
Exalted, and upon this sole account  
He longs to see him sunk to low degree.—  
Another is depress'd through fear to lose  
Power, grace, and honor, should a rival mount ;  
Whence grieving, he his neighbour's fall pursues.—  
Another, roused by injury, longs to wreak 121  
His fiery wrath, and vengeance to obtain ;  
And he must needs his neighbour's misery seek :  
Beneath us is this triple love subdued.  
Now of that other love some knowledge gain,  
Which keeps no measure, though it aims at good.—  
Some blessing indistinct is wish'd by each, 127  
In which the soul a sweet repose may find ;  
Whence all essay their several good to reach :  
If love too languid urges to pursue,  
Or to obtain it,—to this round assign'd,  
After repentance, meet ye sufferings due.

Another good there is—not cause of bliss—

133

Not full fruition,—not that essence blest

Of every good the source :—the love of this,

By mortal man too lavishly indulged,

The inmates of the higher circles rue ;

How triply shared is not by me divulged—

The search of this thou mayst thyself pursue.”





# **PURGATORY.**



## **CANTO XVIII.**

#### ARGUMENT.

---

VIRGIL continuing his discourse concerning love, explains its origin. Free-will. Reason. Spirits rush by in great eagerness to ascend, recording as they pass instances of zeal and affection. Others follow, suffering for their lukewarmness, and recording instances of their crime. Dante falls asleep.

## PURGATORY.

HIS reasoning ended, my exalted guide  
 Attentively survey'd my countenance,  
 To see if I were fully satisfied.

But that true father, who at once perceived  
The timid wish I had not dared to tell,  
Soon by his speech my fear to speak relieved.  
Then I: "My sight, O master, gains such force  
In thy clear rays, that I discern full well  
All that is meant and taught in thy discourse.

Show me, I therefore pray thee, sire revered, 13  
That love, to which all virtuous deeds, and those  
Their opposite in kind thou hast referr'd."

"Direct to me thine intellectual sight,"  
He said, "and I their error will disclose,  
Who, blind themselves, would fain lead others right.  
The soul, which is created prone to love, 19  
Awaken'd into action by delight,  
To all that pleases doth obedient move.  
Your apprehension from some object true  
An image draws, unfolding it to sight,  
So that the soul is tempted to pursue.  
And if the soul, thus wrought on, is inclined,— 25  
That inclination is a natural love,  
Newly produced by pleasure in your mind.  
Thus, e'en as fire spontaneous mounts on high,  
Created apt to raise itself above,  
And reach again its storehouse in the sky ;  
The soul, so smitten, enters on desire— 31  
A spiritual motion, resting never  
Till the belov'd object it acquire.  
Now will appear to thee how far they err  
From truth, who love of every kind whatever,  
As in itself deserving praise, aver.

Love may itself perhaps be understood 37

As always good ; but still we sometimes find  
The impression bad, although the wax be good."

I answer'd : " Love to me is render'd plain

By thy discourse, and my attentive mind ;  
But this hath fill'd me with my doubts again.

For, if from outward objects love gains force, 43

And the mind acts from such sole impulse—then  
No merit has it, right or wrong its course."

" As far as reason," he replied, " can reach,

I may direct thee ; but beyond its ken  
'Tis faith that works, and Beatrice must teach.

Each spiritual essence, that is join'd 49

With matter yet in separate state exists,  
Contains within the virtue of its kind ;

Which, if it worketh not, remains unseen,

Save in the effect ; as in a plant subsists  
Life, not perceived but by the foliage green,—

So, from what source the apprehension springs 55

Of first ideas, vainly men enquire,  
Or whence comes passion for the first loved things.

It lives in man, as instinct in the bee

For making honey ; and this first desire  
Nor praise nor censure can infer to thee.

- That every other wish round this may bend, 61  
In you is placed a power, whose warning voice  
Should still the threshold of the assent defend.  
This is the source, whence praise or blame accrues,  
As good or bad affections are your choice—  
Winnow'd by each, who this or that pursues.  
Those who the matter fully sifted, knew 67  
This innate liberty, and felt its force ;  
Whence moral codes for after times they drew.  
Hence lay we down, that from necessity  
Each love that springs in you derives its source ;  
But in yourselves the powers to check it lie.  
Free-will is term'd ' the noble faculty' 73  
By Beatrice ;—if then 'tis named by her,  
Remember to bear this in memory."  
The moon, that tardily at midnight came,  
Was bidding now the stars to disappear,  
In figure like a bucket all in flame—  
Stemming the heaven abandon'd by the sun, 79  
Between the Corsic and Sardinian coast,  
When Rome beholds him as his course is run :—  
And that kind shade who hath more fame bestow'd  
On Pietola than Mantua e'er could boast,  
Had eased my mind of its oppressive load ;

- When I (whose doubts had all been set at rest 85  
By reason clear and argument refined)  
Stood like to one by drowsiness oppress.  
But vanish'd soon this drowsiness ; for now  
Came suddenly, approaching from behind,  
A troop of spirits o'er the mountain's brow :  
And like the fury and the crowd display'd 91  
Ismenus' and Asopus' banks beside,  
What time the Thebans call'd for Bacchus' aid ;  
So each, throughout this round, as I beheld,  
Urging his hurried footstep, onward hied,—  
By goodly zeal and righteous love impell'd.  
They reach'd us soon—so rapidly they swept ; 97  
For none amid that crowd immense was slack :  
And two in front cried, shouting as they wept ;  
“The Virgin sought the hills without delay ;  
And Cæsar, hastening into Spain, to attack  
Ilerda, smote Marseilles upon his way.”  
“Haste, haste,”—the others cried who near them stood, 103  
“Through want of love be time not thrown away ;  
Grace springs anew from ardour to do good.”  
“O ye in whom a fervour, now acute,  
Doth haply compensate for old delay,  
Which to lukewarmness owed its primal root ;

- This man who lives (no idle tale I feign) 109  
    Would with the rising sun ascend the steep ;  
    Then say where nearest he the stair may gain.”  
These words were spoken by my faithful guide ;  
    When, “ Close behind us now the pathway keep,  
    And thou shalt find the entrance,” one replied.  
“ So anxious to pursue our course are we, 115  
    We cannot pause ;—forgiveness then we pray,  
    If this our duty rudeness seem to be.  
San Zeno’s Abbot in Verona I,  
    What time good Barbarossa’s arm held sway,  
    Whom Milan speaks of yet lamentingly.  
He with one foot already in the grave 121  
    Shall for that monastery shortly mourn,  
    And for the abuse of power forgiveness crave ;  
Since he, for shepherd of the flock proclaim’d  
    His son, in mind defective, and ill born,  
    Nor less in person than in temper maim’d.  
Whether he added more, or here refrain’d, 127  
    I know not—he so rapidly had pass’d ;  
    But this I heard, and gladly I retain’d.  
And he, in every need who gave me aid,  
    Said : “ Turn, and upon those thine eyesight cast,  
    Whose sharp reproaches indolence upbraid.”



- This cry in rear of all the rest was theirs : 133  
    “ They, unto whom the Red Sea open'd, died  
    Ere Jordan's stream beheld his destin'd heirs.  
They too, who would not share Æneas' woes,  
    And by his fortunes faithfully abide,  
    A life inglorious for their portion chose.”  
When now these shades so far beyond had press'd 139  
    That I no more their distant forms descried,  
    New thought was sudden wak'd within my breast,  
Whence other thoughts of different kind arose ;  
    And I so wander'd on from theme to theme,  
    Mine eyes at last in rapture lost I close,  
And change my meditation for a dream.
-

# **PURGATORY.**



## **CANTO XIX.**

#### ARGUMENT.



DANTE sees a vision, in which Falsehood and Truth appear to him in the form of two Ladies. He proceeds to the fifth circle, where he meets with Pope Adrian the fifth, purging the sin of Avarice.

## PURGATORY.

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### CANTO XIX.

It was the hour when now the heat of day 1  
Can warm the coldness of the moon no more—  
By Earth or Saturn quench'd the solar ray ;  
And when the Geomancers, ere the dawn,  
Their Greater Fortune in the east explore  
Ascending whence night's shades are first withdrawn ;  
That in a dream there stood before my sight 7  
A female, stammering, and with squinting eyes,  
Maim'd hands, distorted legs, and deadly white.  
I gazed on her ; and as to members chill'd  
By night, the sun a genial warmth supplies ;  
E'en so my look her soul with comfort fill'd ;

- And sudden she arose, again endued 13  
With power of speech :—her face, late pale and wan,  
With love's own colour quickly was renew'd :  
And when the use of words she had regain'd,  
To sing in such sweet accents she began,  
Mine ears from listening scarce had been restrain'd.  
And thus she sang : “ That Syren sweet am I 19  
Who charms the wandering sailor on the sea,  
Lulling her hearers into extasy.  
Ulysses from his course I drew astray,  
Enamour'd with my song ;—who lists to me  
But seldom parts—so absolute my sway.”  
Scarcely her speech was ended, when a dame 25  
Of staid and holy mien I saw appear,  
Anxious to put the former one to shame.  
“ O Virgil, Virgil, who is this ? ” she said  
In tone indignant :—then approach'd he near,  
His eyes fix'd wholly on that virtuous maid.  
She seiz'd the other, nor delay'd to uncloze 31  
Her vests in front, and show'd her stomach, whence  
Came that which woke me—such a fume arose.  
I turn'd mine eyes ; and Virgil said : “ Take heed ;—  
Thrice have I call'd thee ;—rise, and let us hence ;  
Straight to the opening may we hence proceed.”

- Now throughout all the sacred mountain were 37  
The circles fill'd with light ; and as we went,  
The youthful sun was shining in our rear.  
Following his steps, I wore an anxious brow,  
Charged with a heavy weight of thought, and bent  
Like to the one half of a bridge ; when now  
A voice cried : " Come ; the entrance is at hand," 43  
In accent so benign and passing sweet  
As ne'er was heard in this our mortal land.  
With wings expanded, like a swan's to sight,  
He who had spoken, upward led our feet  
Betwixt the walls of flint that fenced the height.  
His pinions then he moved, and fann'd us, saying : 49  
" Blessed are they that mourn ;—their souls, renew'd,  
Shall be consoled."—" What is it thou art weighing,  
That earth alone appears to engage thy view ?"  
To me my kind instructor said ; while stood  
The Angel somewhat raised above the two.  
" An object newly seen hath in me wrought 55  
This change," I answer'd, " and enthrals me so,  
I have not power to drive it from my thought."  
" Hast thou beheld," he said, " that sorceress old,  
To those above us now sole cause of woe ?  
Hast seen how man may loose him from her hold ?

- Spurn then the earthly coils that round thee cling,      61  
And to the lure above direct thine eyes,  
Whirl'd with the spheres by heaven's eternal King."  
And, as a falcon, which first scans its feet,  
Then turns him to the call, and forward flies,  
In eagerness to snatch the tempting meat ;  
E'en so did I ;—and where appear'd a way      67  
Carved in the rock, I climb'd the steep ascent,  
Till in my view the winding cornice lay.  
In the fifth circle fully launch'd, I found  
A multitude indulging loud lament,  
Lying on earth, their faces to the ground.  
"My soul hath cleav'd to the dust," I heard,      73  
In voices mingled with such deep drawn sighs,  
That it was hard to comprehend a word.  
"O ye elect, to mitigate whose woes  
Doth comfort both from hope and justice rise,  
Be pleased the lofty staircase to disclose."  
"If ye approach, exempt from fear to share      79  
Our penalty, and haste the road to find,—  
See that your right hand tow'rd the brink ye bear."  
This answer to the poet's speech I heard  
From one ahead of us ; whence I divined  
The point in which their apprehension err'd ;

- And bent my eyes on those of my dear lord, 85  
Who to the strong desire that mine express'd  
Render'd with joyful look a kind accord.  
Of my own will, when I was free to act,  
My footsteps to that creature I address'd,  
Whose words so lately did my thoughts attract ;  
And said : " O spirit, in whom grief matures 91  
That which you need, to turn to God again,  
Suspend for me that greater care of yours.  
Say who you were, and wherefore 'tis your doom  
To hold your backs aloft :—can I obtain  
Aught for you there, whence I alive am come ?"  
And he to me : " 'Tis meet I tell thee why 97  
Heaven upward turns our backs ; but first be told  
That great St. Peter's successor was I.  
Between Siestri and Chiaveri flows  
A beauteous river, from whose name of old  
The title of my family arose.  
Soon had I proof how great the mantle's weight 103  
To him who fain would keep it from the mire ;  
All burdens else seem but as feathers.—Late,  
Full late, alas ! to me conversion came ;  
But when I was ordain'd Rome's mighty Sire,  
I saw how false was every earthly aim.



- I saw that there the heart could find no rest ;                    109  
    No higher objects in that life were given ;  
    Whence love of this was kindled in my breast.  
Till then, my life in misery had been pass'd,  
    Coveting all things, and estranged from Heaven ;—  
    Now, into penal woes thou see'st me cast.
- The effect of avarice may here be seen,                    115  
    For all the spirits toward the ground are bent ;  
    Nor doth the mount exhibit pangs more keen.  
For as our eyes delighted not to rear  
    Their gaze aloft, on earthly things intent,  
    So now to earth hath Justice bound them here.
- As avarice erst extinguish'd all our love,                    121  
    Whence he that worketh worketh but in vain ;  
    So Justice here, without the power to move,  
Hath bound us hand and foot ; and till it please  
    Heaven's righteous Sire, so long shall we remain  
    Stretch'd out immoveable, and ill at ease."
- I bow'd me in respect, and would have spoken ;                    127  
    But soon as I began, he, hearing me,  
    Knew by my voice the reverential token,  
And said : " What is it makes thee bend so low ?"  
    Then I : " This tribute to thy dignity,  
    Conscience, that true director, bade me show."

- “ Arise, O brother, from thy knees,” he said ; 133  
“ Be not deceived—a fellow labourer I ;  
And to one Master is our homage paid.  
If e'er that sacred evangelic sound  
Was heard of thee : ‘ They marry not on high,’  
The meaning of my words may well be found.  
Now go—I would not have thee tarry more ; 139  
For thy delay my weeping doth prevent,  
Which ripens that whereof thou spak'st before.  
Allied to me, on earth one dwelleth yet,  
My niece Alagia—pure and innocent,  
Unless our house a bad example set ;  
And she alone my race doth represent,
-

**PURGATORY.**



**CANTO XX.**

#### ARGUMENT.



EXAMPLES of poverty, liberality, and avarice. Hugh Capet gives a history of his family. All the spirits join in singing "Glory to God in the highest."—Dante is anxious to know the cause of the mountain's shaking.

## PURGATORY.

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### CANTO XX.

IN vain strives will with mightier will contending ;      1  
Wherefore I drew the sponge unsatisfied  
From out the water, to his pleasure bending.  
Now o'er the rock it was my task to wind,  
Threading the way together with my guide,  
As on a wall by battlements confined :  
For they who drop by drop pour through the eye      7  
That ill by which the world is all possest,  
Full closely to the outer margin lie.  
Curst be thou, ancient Wolf!—thy greediness  
Surpassing that of every other beast ;—  
Thy hunger so profound—so fathomless !

- O heaven! by whose revolving orbs, as some 13  
Have deem'd, all changes are produced below,  
When will the victor to destroy her come?  
With rare and tardy steps we onward went,  
Observant of the shades, who, plunged in woe,  
Pour'd forth their grief in wailing and lament;  
When in advance a plaintive note arose, 19  
"O blessed Mary!"—on mine ear it fell,  
Like to a woman's cry in child-bed throes.  
And, "Oh, how poor," it added, "was thy plight,  
That lowly dwelling doth attest full well,  
Where thou thy holy burden gav'st to light!  
O good Fabricius," then pursued the voice, 25  
"Virtue accompanied with poverty,  
Rather than vicious grandeur was thy choice."  
These words such pleasure gave me, I drew on  
To ascertain more clearly who might be  
The spirit from whose lips they came.—Anon  
Those bounteous gifts continued it to praise 31  
Which Nicholas unto the virgins made,  
That honor might attend their youthful days.  
"O spirit, tell, I pray thee, what thy name,  
Who speakest of such good;" and "why," I said,  
"Dost thou alone these worthy themes proclaim?"

Not unrequited shall be thy reply, 37

If I return to close the short lived race  
Of human life, which to its end draws nigh."

"Not in the hope of comfort thence," said he,  
"Will I inform thee, but because such grace,  
Ere thou art dead, is manifest in thee.

Of that ill favour'd plant was I the root, 43

Which so o'ershadow'd all the Christian land  
That rarely thence is gather'd wholesome fruit.

Were power to Douay, Ghent, Lille, Bruges given,  
Revenge would soon arrive; and at His hand  
I ask revenge, whose dwelling is in heaven.

Hugh Capet was the name I had on earth : 49

The Philips and the Louis', who bore sway  
In France of late, from me derive their birth :

My sire at Paris plied the butcher's trade.

When all the ancient kings had pass'd away,  
Save only one in sable weeds array'd,

I found the imperial reins within my hands : 55

From new possessions such great power I won,  
And friends flock'd round me in such numerous bands,

That in due course of time the widow'd crown

Was placed upon the forehead of my son,  
From whom the consecrated bones come down.

- Till the great dower of Provence took away 61  
    Reproach of birth, a limited command  
    My offspring had,—then virtuous : from that day  
Commenced with violence and many a lie  
    Its rapine ;—for amends it then laid hand  
    On Normandy, Poitou, and Gascony.
- Charles enter'd Italy, and, for amends, 67  
    A victim of the young Conraddin made,  
    And sent to heaven Aquinas, for amends.
- I see from France, ere many years have flown,  
    Another Charles Italia's peace invade,  
    Thereby to make his race more fully known.
- Unarm'd he goes, save with that lance alone 73  
    Which Judas tilted with ; and this he bears  
    So, that e'en now is Florence overthrown.
- Land shall he reap not ; but of shame and guilt  
    The heavier load, as, light the heart he wears,  
    While blood around him is profusely spilt.
- I see the other, captured on the waves, 79  
    And just let loose, his bargain'd daughter sell,  
    E'en as the corsairs do their other slaves.
- O Avarice ! what canst thou more effect  
    Than draw my lineage to thee by such spell  
    That its own blood it ceases to respect ?



- That past and future ill may seem less dread— 85  
    Entering Alagna, lo the fleur-de-lis,  
    And in his vicar Christ a captive led !  
I see him mock'd a second time ;—again  
    The vinegar and gall produced I see ;  
    And Christ himself 'twixt living robbers slain.  
I see the modern Pilate, whom avails 91  
    No cruelty to sate, and who unbidden  
    Into the temple sets his greedy sails.  
O thou, my Lord ! when shall I joyfully  
    Behold the vengeance, which, profoundly hidden,  
    Makes sweet thine anger in thy mystery ?  
She whom I praised—the Holy Spirit's spouse, 97  
    When thou didst turn unto me with request  
    For comment, forms the subject of our vows  
During the period that the day remains ;  
    But soon as night around us throws her vest,  
    Then take we up instead far different strains.  
Pygmalion's sordid avarice next we chide, 103  
    Whom greedy lust of all-engrossing gain  
    Changed to a robber, traitor, parricide.  
Midas' dire sufferings then our thoughts engage,  
    Who compass'd all that avarice would obtain—  
    A laughing stock to every future age.

Next doth each spirit Achan's guilt record, 109  
Who stole the spoils, and seemeth still pursued  
By Joshua's vengeance for the crime abhorr'd.  
Sapphira and her husband we accuse ;  
We laud the hoof that Heliodorus rued ;  
And all the mountain echoes the abuse  
Of Polymnestor, who slew Polydore : 115  
And last of all, ' O Crassus,' is our cry,  
' Tell, for thou know'st, how tastes the golden ore ?'  
Thus high or low we each our thoughts express ;  
And various feelings various notes supply,  
With greater intonation or with less.  
Not I alone recorded the high praise 121  
Of those fair names here mention'd during day,  
But nearer thee I chanced my voice to raise."  
Already had we left that shade behind,  
And with the utmost strength that in us lay  
Were striving up the rugged steep to wind ;  
When felt I quake the mountain fearfully, 127  
As it were falling, whence my blood ran cold,  
Chill'd, like the blood of one led forth to die.  
Never with shock so fierce was Delos riven,  
Ere yet her nest Latona laid, to enfold  
Her double progeny, the eyes of heaven.

Then such a shout anon from every side 133

Was utter'd, that my master, drawing near,

Exclaim'd : " Fear not, while I thy footsteps guide."

All shouted : " Glory be to God on high,"

As from a spot adjoining I could hear,

To which with more distinctness came the cry.

Immoveable we stood, in doubt suspended, 139

Like to the shepherds who first heard this song,

Till ceased the trembling, and the strain had ended.

Our holy path we then pursued again,

Viewing the spirits as we went along,

Who each, stretch'd out, resumed his mournful strain.

Never did ignorance so fiercely stir 145

Desire of knowledge in my anxious breast,

(If on this point my memory doth not err)

As then seem'd to possess me, wrapt in thought ;

Nor dared I ask a question, such our haste ;

Nor of myself could I distinguish aught :

Timid and thoughtful onward thus I press'd.



**PURGATORY.**



**CANTO XXI.**

#### ARGUMENT.



The spirit of Statius explains to Dante the occasion of the mountain's shaking, viz. whenever any one prepares to quit Purgatory, and take his flight to Paradise. Statius, forgetting Virgil was a shadow, endeavours to embrace him.

## PURGATORY.

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### CANTO XXI.

THE natural thirst which ne'er can be allay'd, 1  
Save by the water from that hallow'd fount,  
For which the woman of Samaria pray'd,  
Tormented me ; while o'er the obstructed way  
Behind my guide I hasten'd up the mount,  
Sorrowing for those who their just penance pay.  
And lo, as in his Gospel writes St. Luke, 7  
That Christ appear'd to two upon the road,  
When He, uprisen, the hollow tomb forsook,  
A shade appear'd to us ; and in our rear  
Approach'd, low gazing on the prostrate crowd ;  
And first bespoke us, ere we were aware.

" May God, my brethren, grant you peace," he said. 13

We sudden turn'd ; and Virgil courteously

A salutation of like import made :

" Peace in the assembly of the blest be thine,

By that impartial Court assign'd to thee

Which bids eternal banishment be mine."

" How so ?" while we were hastening on, he cried, 19

" If ye indeed are shades by God unblest,

Who up the stairs of heaven hath been your guide ?"

My master then : " The marks observe again,

By the Angel on my comrade's brow impress'd ;

They show that with the good 'tis his to reign.

But because she who spinneth night and day 25

Not yet for him had drawn the distaff through,

That Clotho threads for all of mortal clay,

His soul, that sister is to thee and me,

Could not alone its upward course pursue,

Since not like our's his faculty to see.

Hence was I summon'd from the throat of Hell 31

To lead his steps ; and I will be his guide

Far as my knowledge may avail :—but tell

Wherefore the mountain lately shook, and why

E'en to its humid feet on every side

Sent forth the crowd that universal cry ?"

- Asking this question Virgil brought me aid, 37  
And pass'd the thread so justly through the eye  
Of my desire, my thirst was much allay'd.  
"So holy is this mountain," he commenced,  
"That by no strange irregularity  
Or want of order is it influenced.  
Here changes come not, save from what in grace 43  
Heaven to itself hence pleases to receive ;  
From nought beside vicissitude takes place.  
Therefore nor falleth rain, nor snow, nor hail,  
Nor hoary frost, nor dew at morn or eve,  
Higher than you three steps of easy scale.  
No clouds, or dense or subtle, here are ranging, 49  
Nor lightning seen, nor Thaumas' daughter fair,—  
Often to mortal eyes her station changing ;  
Nor ever doth the vapour dry with heat  
Aspire beyond the three first stages, where  
The Vicar of St. Peter rests his feet.  
Haply the mountain trembles lower down ; 55  
But here, whatever winds in earth are pent,  
(I know not why) no trembling e'er was known,  
Save that produced, when, feeling purified,  
A spirit rises, or for its ascent  
Moves onward, by such shout accompanied.



- Seized with a wish to be entirely free 61  
And change its dwelling place, th' expanding mind  
Proves by this very will its purity.  
It will'd before ; but strong desires restrain ;  
For that same will which erst to sin inclined  
Doth heavenly justice now incline to pain.  
And I, who full five hundred years have lain 67  
Thus grieving, felt but lately in my breast  
Free wish a better dwelling to attain.  
Hence didst thou feel the shock, and hear the praise  
Throughout the mountain to the Lord address ;  
And may He soon those pious spirits raise."  
Thus spoke he :—and as men from drinking share 73  
Pleasure proportion'd to the thirst it slakes,  
My full content no language could declare.  
Now said my guide : "The net by which ye are bound,  
I see,—how ye are freed, and wherefore shakes  
The mount, and cries of mutual joy resound.  
But who thou wert, oh ! give me now to know ; 79  
And wherefore here thou didst for ages lie,  
Let thy own gracious words the reason show."  
"What time the Roman Titus, named the good,  
Avenged the wounds, with aid of the most High,  
Whence gush'd, by Judas sold, the guiltless blood,

That name which most endures and honours most," 85

The spirit answer'd me, " was mine on earth ;

And I, with faith unblest, renown could boast.

So sweet the vocal spirit that I breathed,

Rome drew me from the country of my birth,

And there my brows with well earn'd myrtle wreathed.

The name of Statius upon earth I bear ; 91

I sang of Thebes, then of Achilles' fame,

But lived not to complete my second care.

The sparks that my poetic warmth inspired

Were emanations from the heavenly flame,

By which above a thousand have been fired :

I mean the *Æneid*—that rich mother, who 97

Fill'd my poetic veins with nourishment ;

And from whose breast each excellence I drew :

And to have lived while Virgil breathed the air,—

Of banishment I gladly would consent

A year beyond my penance due to bear."

These words made Virgil turn to where I stood, 103

With look that silent said : " Be silent thou ;"

But Virtue cannot all that Virtue would :

For in the wake of passion, smile and tear

So closely follow, that they least allow

The will to govern in the most sincere.

- I smiled, as one who winks ;—whereat the shade      109  
    Refrain'd from words, and fasten'd on mine eye,  
    In which most clearly is the soul pourtray'd.  
“And may success,” he said, “thy labours crown,  
    As thou inform me, from thy features why  
    The lightning of a smile was lately thrown.”  
“On either side now am I press'd amain ;      115  
    One bids me speak, the other bids me not ;  
    Whereat I sigh, nor do I sigh in vain.”  
“Speak,” said the master : “let not fear repress  
    Thy utterance, but speak ; and tell him what  
    He longs to know with so much eagerness.”  
Then I : “Thou haply wonderest, ancient sprite,      121  
    To see the smile that o'er my features came ;  
    But greater wonder I would fain excite.  
He who conducts aloft my eager ken  
    Is that same Virgil, by whose ardent flame  
    Thou wert inspired to sing of gods and men.  
To other cause if thou assign my smile,      127  
    Abandon it as false ; nor deem it other  
    Than those same words thou spok'st of him erewhile.”  
To embrace my teacher's feet he now essay'd,  
    Low bending down ; but he : “Desist, O brother ;  
    A shade art thou—I also am a shade.”

He rising then : " See now how brightly beaming      133  
Towards thee the fire of my affection springs,  
When I forget our airy essence, deeming  
Of empty shadows, as substantial things."

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**PURGATORY.**

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**CANTO XXII.**

#### ARGUMENT.



VIRGIL, Statius, and Dante ascend up to the sixth circle, where the vice of Greediness is punished. Statius attributes his conversion to Christianity, as well as his taste for poetry to Virgil. They come to the tree of knowledge.—Voices are heard recording instances of temperance.

## PURGATORY.

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### CANTO XXII.

THE Angel having razed another scar 1  
From off my brow, and shown me the access  
To the sixth round, was left behind us far ;  
And “ blessed ” had those holy shades repeated  
Who rule their appetites by righteousness,  
And with “ I thirst ” their welcome had completed :  
I, lighter than before, now swiftly ran, 7  
Following the nimble spirits up the ascent,  
Nor thought of toil ; when Virgil thus began :  
“ That love which Virtue kindles—so its fire  
Shine forth, not idly in the bosom pent,  
Is ever wont a kindred flame to inspire.

- Hence, from the hour when Juvenal came down, 13  
And unto me, in depths of Limbo cast,  
Made all the warmth of thy affection known—  
My will tow'ards thee was of such friendly sort,  
As ne'er for one not seen hath been surpast;  
So that to me these stairs will seem full short.
- But tell me, and a kind indulgence lend, 19  
If I with too much freedom loose the rein;  
And reason with me now as with a friend.—  
A habitation how could Avarice find  
Within thy breast, while such a fruitful vein  
Of wisdom held possession of thy mind?"
- To laughter did this question somewhat move 25  
Statius at first;—then he: "Thy every word  
Is welcomed by me as a sign of love.  
'Tis true that things do oftentimes appear,  
Which matter false to cherish doubt afford,  
Because the real sources are not clear.
- This question evidences thy belief 31  
That I was erst the slave of avarice;  
Haply since in yon round I suffer grief:  
Too far from me was avarice removed;  
And in its absence I incurr'd the vice  
Which here some thousand moons has been reprov'd.



- And had I not well ponder'd in my mind 37  
The exclamation that thou mad'st of old,  
Indignant as it were with human kind—  
' Unto what evils dost thou not excite  
The human breast, O cursed love of gold !'  
Now should I urge the stones in ceaseless fight.  
Then I perceived the hands may be too wide 43  
Extended ; and of unrestrain'd expense  
Repented, as of other faults beside.  
How many a one shall from the grave arise  
With shaven locks, through ignorance of the offence ;  
Repenting neither when he lives or dies.  
And know, the vice which answers to another, 49  
(Its very opposite), is with that vice  
Destin'd together in this round to smother.  
Wherefore if I in penance have been seen  
With those who purge themselves from avarice,  
For the reverse my punishment hath been."  
" What time that cruel war employ'd thy verse," 55  
The singer of bucolic song rejoin'd,  
" Waged by ill-starr'd Jocasta's double curse,  
To judge from what by Clio thou wert taught,  
That faith did not as yet possess thy mind,  
Without which virtuous act availeth not.

And if 'twere so, what sun or torch dispersed 61  
The darkness, so that thou thy sail couldst spread  
Behind the Fisherman?"—"Thou wert the first  
Who to Parnassus' grotto leading me,  
Taught how to drink its hallow'd streams," he said;  
"And my first steps towards God were lit by thee.  
Thou didst as one who doth his torch by night 67  
Behind him bear—not by himself discern'd,  
But to his followers yielding useful light—  
When thou didst prophesy, 'A world revived,  
Justice restored, primæval days return'd,  
An offspring born, from heaven itself derived.'  
Poet and Christian I became through thee; 73  
But that more fully thou mayst understand,  
Wrought in clear colours shall this outline be.—  
Already in th' impregnate world was sown  
The new belief, wide spread through every land  
By the apostles of the eternal throne;  
And thy recorded words of prophecy 79  
So well with the new preachers harmoniz'd,  
That their accustom'd visitor was I.  
So holy in my eyes the course they kept,  
That when Domitian's torturing rod chastiz'd,  
Their sufferings never were by me unwept.

- And while it was my lot on earth to bide, 85  
I gave them friendly succour, and despised  
(Their righteous habits known) all sects beside.  
And ere in song I led the Grecians near  
The Theban rivers, I had been baptized ;  
But secret held my Christian faith through fear;—  
Long time a Pagan still in outward show. 91  
For this lukewarmness full four centuries  
Round the fourth circle was I doom'd to go.  
Thou, therefore, who didst tear away the veil  
That hid such mighty blessings from my eyes,  
While ample time is our's the mount to scale,  
Tell me where our loved Terence may be found, 97  
Cæcilius, Plautus, Varro, if thou know'st,—  
Tell me, are they in hell, and in what round ?”  
“ They, Persius, I, and many others are,”  
My guide replied, “ with him, the Grecian's boast,  
(Nursed by the Muses with surpassing care)  
In the dark prison's foremost round confined.— 103  
Oft of the mountain are we wont to speak  
Where a perennial seat our nurses find.  
With us Euripides and Agatho,  
Simonides, Anacreon—many a Greek,  
Who long has worn the laurel on his brow.

- Thy heroines there are seen—Antigone, 109  
Ismene, sorrowing as on earth ; and there  
Argià may be seen, Deiphile ;  
She who disclosed the freshening spring Langià,  
The daughter of Tiresias, Thetis fair,  
And with her sisters famed Deidamià.”
- Now both the bards were silent, each intent 115  
On casting round their eager eyes anew,  
Free from the walls and from the steep ascent :—  
Four of the handmaids, on the day attending,  
Had dropt behind—the pole the fifth one drew,  
Its glowing horn directly upwards bending ;
- When thus my guide : “ Behoveth us to keep 121  
The dexter shoulder bending tow’rds the verge,  
As is our wont in circling round the steep.”
- Thus custom was our guide ; and with less fear  
Our onward way proceeded we to urge,  
Since sanction’d by that worthy shade we were.
- They were advancing first ;—behind them I 127  
Went on alone, and listen’d to their talk,  
Inspiring thoughts that nourish poetry.
- But soon was check’d their speech that pleased me well ;  
For lo, a tree stood midway in our walk,  
With fruit both grateful to the sight and smell.

- And upward as a fir from bough to bough 133  
Tapers, so downward this was growing small ;  
That none its branches might ascend, I trow.  
And at that side on which our road was stopt,  
From the high rock a limpid stream did fall,  
Sprinkling the lofty foliage as it dropt.—  
Near to the holy tree the poets came, 139  
When from within the leaves a voice anon,  
“ Be sparing of this fruit,” was heard to exclaim :  
“ Mary, who pleads for you, took more delight  
That honour to the marriage feast be shown,  
Than in indulging her own appetite.  
The Roman women were content of yore 145  
With water for their beverage.—Daniel erst,  
Contemning food, was taught in wisdom’s lore.—  
Beauteous as gold, the earliest age of man.—  
Hunger made acorns savoury ; and through thirst  
With sweetest nectar every streamlet ran.—  
Locusts and honey were the food whereon 151  
The Baptist in the lonely desert fed ;  
And hence the greatness, and the fame he won ;  
As in the Gospel history may be read.”

# **PURGATORY.**



## **CANTO XXIII.**

#### ARGUMENT.



Among a number of pale emaciated spirits doing penance for gluttony, Dante recognizes his friend Forese; who informs him that their pain consists in a keen desire to partake of the fruit of the tree. He takes occasion to inveigh against the immodesty of the Florentine women.

## PURGATORY.

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### CANTO XXIII.

WHILE through the foliage green with stedfast gaze      1  
    I look intent, like one who in the vain  
    Pursuit of little birds consumes his days,  
“Come now,” to me my more than father cried ;  
    “ The time allotted us, my son, I fain  
    Would wish to some more useful task applied.”  
I turn’d my looks and steps with equal speed      7  
    Unto those Sages ; charm’d by whose discourse  
    Of that laborious road I took no heed.  
And lo, a song, in plaintive tone, was heard—  
    “ My lips, O Lord”—whose soul subduing force  
    Both sorrow and delight at once conferr’d.



- "O my loved sire, what voices these?" said I: 13  
    "Spirits are hastening yonder," answer'd he,  
    "Perchance their knot of duty to untie."  
As pilgrims, eager to pursue their way,  
    O'ertaking strangers, turn their looks to see;  
    Yet, as they gaze, speed on without delay;  
Thus, from behind us, urged by greater haste, 19  
    A band of spirits came, and with fix'd stare,  
    Devout and silent, kenn'd us as they pass'd.  
Hollow the eye of each, and dark—their look  
    Pallid—and all their features were so spare,  
    That from the bones the skin its figure took.  
Not even Erisichthon was, I ween, 25  
    So dried and wither'd in the form he wore,  
    Through long continued hunger, when most lean.  
"Behold," immersed in inward thought I said,  
    "The race who lost Jerusalem of yore,  
    When Mary on her infant offspring fed."  
The sockets seem'd like rings without the gems: 31  
    Who readeth "omo" on man's visage, he  
    Had there full plainly recognised the m's.  
Who could believe, unless instructed first,  
    How water and an apple's scent could be  
    So potent in producing want and thirst?

- Now was I wondering at their being so thin, 37  
For not as yet the reason could I see  
Of their dire meagerness and shrivel'd skin ;  
When from the deep recesses of the head  
His eyes a spirit turn'd and fix'd on me ;  
And then, " What grace is this ? " aloud he said.  
His countenance had not his name reveal'd ; 43  
But in his voice I could not fail to trace  
That which his wither'd features had conceal'd.  
This spark it was that lighted up amain  
My recollection of his alter'd face,  
And brought Forese to my mind again.  
" The scaly blotches that deface my skin— 49  
Oh ! look not on them, nor " (such was his prayer)  
" Regard the wretched plight that I am in.  
But let me know the truth concerning thee ;  
And who are those two spirits with thee there—  
Make no delay in telling all to me."  
" Thy death erst caused me many a tear to flow ; 55  
But now no less it grieves me," I rejoin'd,  
" To see thy countenance distorted so.  
Therefore, why smitten thus, for God's sake say ;  
Bid *me* not speak while wonder fills my mind ;  
He ill can speak whose will is far away."

- Then he to me : " By heaven's command divine                    61  
    Into the plant and water left behind  
    A virtue droppeth down ; and hence I pine.  
All these who wail in mournful songs, that erst  
    To excess in food their appetites inclined,  
    Regain their purity by want and thirst.  
Desire to eat and drink is kindled by                                67  
    The odour issuing from the fruit and spray,  
    Which o'er the verdure spreads itself on high.  
Nor once alone is this sad circuit made,  
    To renovate our pain—pain do I say,  
    When ' solace ' is the word I should have said ?  
For that same will conducts us to the tree,                                73  
    Which led Christ joyful ' Eli ' to exclaim,  
    What time with his own blood he set us free."  
And I to him : " Forese, from that day  
    When to the better life thy spirit came,  
    Not yet five little years have pass'd away.—  
If from thee was the power of sinning ta'en,                                79  
    Ere came the season of that wholesome woe,  
    Which unto God espouses us again,  
How was it that so high thy spirit soar'd ?  
    Thee had I thought to find far down below,  
    Where time mispent, by time must be restor'd."

“It was my Nella, who so soon,” he said, 85

“Led me to drink of suffering’s wormwood sweet,  
By her fond tears for me profusely shed.

She, through her prayers devout and sighs unfeign’d,

Released me from the coast that stays our feet,  
And from the other rounds my freedom gain’d.

So much more dear in sight of Heaven is she— 91

My widow’d wife, by me beloved so well,  
As she is single in her piety.

For that Barbagia is of chaster life,

Where all Sardinia’s wandering outcasts dwell,  
Than that Barbagia where I left my wife.

What, O dear brother, wouldst thou have me say? 97

A future time e’en now my notice claims;  
Nor ancient then shall be the present day—

When from the pulpit the decree shall go,

In Florence, to forbid her frontless dames  
To make their swelling breasts a public show.

What barbarous or what Moorish women e’er 103

Required or church or other discipline,  
To make them in the streets some covering wear?

But if the unblushing ones could haply know

What heaven’s swift vengeance doth for them design,  
Full many a mouth to howl were opened now.

For, if my foresight doth not lead me wrong, 109  
Grief shall be theirs, ere bearded is his face  
Who now is lull'd to sleep with nurse's song.  
Brother, no more conceal thy name, I pray :  
Behold, not I alone, but all this race  
With wonder gaze on the divided ray."  
I answer'd him : " If what thou wert with me, 115  
And I with thee, thou call'st to memory,  
Still bitter will the recollection be.  
That life I left, at his persuasive prayer  
Who guides my steps, not many days gone by,  
When" (to the sun I point) " his sister fair  
Full orb'd display'd herself ; know, this is he, 121  
Who from the truly dead, through night profound,  
Hath in my real flesh conducted me.  
Proceeding on by his encouragement,  
I climb'd the mount, and round about it wound,—  
That mount which straight'neth what the world hath bent :  
And he hath vow'd his succour still to deign, 127  
Till I arrive where Beatrice shall be ;  
There it behoves without him I remain.  
Lo Virgil, who these words of comfort spake ;"  
And him I pointed out :—" that other, he,  
For whom but now you felt your kingdom shake  
With joy, his happy exit hence to see."

# **PURGATORY.**



**CANTO XXIV.**

## ARGUMENT.



CONVERSATION continued between Dante and Forese. In the presence of Statius, Forese confesses the superiority of his friend's poetry, as being more true to nature than that of the former age. Forese predicts the violent death of Corso Donati, Dante's political enemy. Another tree—to whose branches, laden with fruit, a troop of hungry spirits are looking up. Voices issue from it, recording examples of gluttony. An Angel invites the three poets up to the seventh and last circle.

## PURGATORY.

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### CANTO XXIV.

CHECK'D not our progress the discourse we held, 1  
Nor check'd discourse our progress ;—on we went,  
Like to a ship by favouring gale impell'd.  
The shades, that seem'd as things that twice had died,  
Drew through their deep sunk eyes astonishment,  
When of my breathing fully certified.  
And I, continuing my discourse, thus spake : 7  
“ That spirit haply mounts more tardily  
Than else it would, for its companions' sake.  
But say where dwells Piccarda, if thou know ;  
And tell, if any one of note I see  
Among this crowd who gaze upon me so.”



- “ My sister, good and beautiful—which most 13  
I know not—triumphs in Olympus’ height,  
Bearing her crown amid the joyful host.”  
He spake ; then added this : “ ’Tis lawful here  
To call each one by name—so lost to sight  
All trace of likeness, through our fast severe.—  
This,”—pointing with his finger to a shade— 19  
Is Buonagiunta the Lucchese ;—that face  
Beyond, through fasting most unsightly made,  
Held in his arms erewhile the Church divine :  
From Tours he came, and now, in hopes of grace,  
Purges, by fast, Bolsena’s eels and wine.”  
Thus, one by one, he show’d me many more : 25  
To hear their names seem’d pleasing to this race ;  
Not one the hue of discontentment wore.  
Ubaldin dalla Pila there I saw  
Through hunger grinding air—and Boniface,  
To many with his crozier giving law ;  
Marchese—who could drink at Forlì erst 31  
With lips less dry than now : though wine might flow,  
Yet he was one that ne’er could quench his thirst.  
But as a man who marks, and learns to prize  
One more than other, him of Lucca so  
Did I—myself most favour’d in his eyes.

- Some words he mutter'd, and I heard the name 37  
    "Gentucca," hoarsely murmur'd from that place  
    By Justice parch'd with such a torturing flame.  
"Spirit," I said, "who seem'st so freely bent  
    On sweet communion—let our minds embrace,  
    And each from other reap the soul's content."  
He answer'd: "She is born, who though still loose 43  
    Her tresses be, my city shall endear,  
    However some may load it with abuse.  
Depart thou then with this prophetic strain;  
    And if my murmuring should confuse thine ear,  
    The events themselves will make its meaning plain.  
But say, if I behold the man who first 49  
    Gave to the world the rhymes which thus begin:  
    'Ladies who in the ways of love are versed.'"  
And I replied: "One am I who indite  
    When love inspires, and as he speaks within,  
    So, in accordance with his bidding, write."  
"Brother," he said, "I now perceive the cause, 55  
    Why vainly I and many others strove,  
    Nor caught the style that wins thee such applause.  
Full well perceive I how your plumes pursue  
    Close in the wake of your inspirer, love;  
    And this in sooth it was we fail'd to do.

He who to snatch a further grace is bent, 61  
Sees not the difference the two styles display :"  
And here the spirit ceased, as though content.  
E'en as the birds that winter near the Nile  
Marshal their numbers in compact array,  
Then fly more swiftly and proceed in file ;  
So all the assembled multitude their face 67  
Turn'd ; and by leanness and desire made light,  
Accelerated instantly their pace.  
And as a man, by running sore opprest,  
Suffers his comrades to pursue their flight,  
Until he hath relieved his panting chest ;  
So did Forese let that sacred train 73  
Pass on before, and came behind with me—  
" And when," exclaim'd he, " shall we meet again ?"  
" My term on earth I know not," I replied,  
" But swift soe'er as my return may be,  
In wish still sooner shall I reach thy side :  
So lost to goodness more and more each day 79  
The place where I on earth am doom'd to dwell,  
And bent on its own ruin."—" Now away,"  
He said ;—" for him, chief cause of this, I see  
Drawn at a horse's tail tow'rd's that grim dell,  
Where guilt may never expiated be.

Quicker at every step the horse is borne, 85  
Increasing ever, till it strikes a blow,  
And leaves his body miserably torn.  
Nor long those wheels shall roll"—and up to heaven  
He raised his eyes—"ere thou shalt fully know  
What may not now in clearer speech be given.  
But I must take my leave, for time is here 91  
So precious, that I may no more remain,  
Measuring my footsteps with thy slow career."  
As from a troop, advancing in array,  
Issues a knight at gallop, to obtain  
The honour of commencing the affray—  
With rapid step so left he us behind ; 97  
And on the road I tarried with the two  
Such eminent instructors of mankind.  
And when he had so far his way made good,  
That now mine eyes his figure could not view  
More clearly than his words I understood,  
Laden with fruit and foliage I discern'd 103  
Another apple tree, which seem'd full nigh,  
Though tow'rd's it were my thoughts but newly turn'd.  
Beneath it raised their hands a numerous train,  
Who to the leaves were muttering forth some cry,  
Like clamorous children that entreat in vain ;—

Imploring one who answers not their prayer ; 109  
But, to augment the ardour of their flame,  
Displays the object, raised aloft in air.  
Then parted they, of error disabused ;  
And onward to the mighty tree we came,  
Which all these fervent prayers and tears refused.  
“ Pass to the other side,—approach not near ; 115  
Higher stands the tree whence Eve her guilt incurr'd ;  
From it was raised the plant that groweth here.”  
Thus from amid the branches some one cried ;  
When Virgil, Statius, and myself, who heard,  
Pass'd on our way along the mountain's side.  
“ Recall those monsters,” it resumed, “ of yore 121  
Form'd in the clouds, who, sated with the feast,  
Their breasts of double front 'gainst Theseus bore ;—  
The Hebrews too,—who knelt to drink the rills,  
When Gideon with an army much decreased  
Descended against Madian from the hills.”  
Thus to the margin keeping close, we pass'd, 127  
Hearing the tales of gluttony they told,  
And the dire recompense it brings at last.  
Then, set at large upon the lonely coast,  
A thousand steps and more we onward hold,  
Each one in silent contemplation lost.

- “ Ye lonely three, why pensive thus proceed ? ” 133  
Sudden a voice exclaim'd ; whereat through dread  
I shook, e'en like some frighten'd paltry steed.  
I raised my eye to ken who it might be ;  
Nor in a furnace hot, so bright and red  
Was glass or metal ever seen by me,  
As one I saw ; who said : “ If ye are fain 139  
To mount, ye needs must turn by yonder track,  
Which they pursue who peace would wish to gain.”  
Mine eyes were dazzled by his aspect bright ;  
Whereat unto my teachers turn'd I back,  
Like one who walks by hearing, not by sight.  
As when, announcing the approach of day, 145  
Impregnated with herbs and flowers of spring,  
Breathes fresh and redolent the air of May,—  
Such was the breeze that gently fann'd my head ;  
And I perceived the waving of the wing,  
Which all around ambrosial odours shed :  
And I could hear a voice : “ O blessed they 151  
By grace enlightened so, that never gust  
Of appetite may lead their will astray—  
Their hunger ever kept in limits just !

# **PURGATORY.**



## **CANTO XXV.**

## ARGUMENT.

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DANTE starts a question, how the shades, which require no food, can become emaciated. Statius, to explain this, enters into a history of the first formation of the soul; and shows how, after it leaves the body, it is impressed by the same passions which influenced it when in the body. In the seventh and last circle incontinence is punished. Instances of Chastity.



## PURGATORY.

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### CANTO XXV.

THE hour enjoin'd us both to mount the height ;                   1  
For unto Taurus the meridian now  
The sun had left, and to the Scorpion night.  
Wherefore like one who stays not in his speed,  
But onward strains, whate'er confront his brow,  
If stimulated by the spur of need ;  
So through that narrow track we entrance made,                   7  
One first, the other following up the stair,  
Whose narrowness to walk abreast forbade.  
As the young stork now elevates the wing,  
Eager for flight,—now drops it in despair,  
To leave the nest not yet adventuring ;

- So I, in whom the wish and fear to enquire 13  
Held sway within my breast alternately,  
Was now like one in act to speak :—my sire,  
Permitting not our rapid pace to bar  
Discourse, said : “ Let the tardy arrow fly,  
Since thou hast drawn the bow of speech so far.”
- Then open’d I my lips—all fear subdued— 19  
And thus began : “ How can it be that they  
Can e’er grow thin who have no need of food ?”  
“ If thou hadst Melcager’s fate recall’d,  
Who wasted with the wasting torch away,  
This doubt,” he said, “ had not thy mind enthrall’d :  
And hadst thou thought, how, in a mirror seen, 25  
Thine image doth thy every turn obey,  
What now seems difficult, had easy been.  
But that thy mind may fully rest assured,  
See Statius here, whom I entreat and pray,  
That by his succour may thy wounds be cured.”
- “ If in thy presence,” Statius made reply, 31  
“ The eternal prospects I to him unroll,  
Bear with the excuse—I cannot thee deny.”  
He then began : “ My son, if thou aright  
Receive my words in thy attentive soul,  
They to the doubt proposed shall furnish light.

- Pure blood, required not by the thirsty veins, 37  
But which, like remnant of superfluous food  
Upon a table overcharged, remains,  
Within the deep recesses of the heart  
With an informing virtue is endued,  
Like that which life doth to the frame impart.  
Perfected more, below it is convey'd, 43  
And thence impell'd, until at last it flows  
Into the place for its reception made.  
The one receives the other—one inclined  
To act—the other passive—as dispose  
The heart's recesses, where it is refined.  
Then meeting, it begins to operate, 49  
Coagulating first ;—gives life anon  
To that it brought to a consistent state.  
Become an active faculty, the soul,  
Like to a plant, (different in this alone  
That one still travels—one hath reach'd its goal)  
Continues working, moves and feels, as though 55  
Sea sponge it were, and thence acquires the art  
To organize the powers that from it flow.  
Now through each part, my son, doth wide expand  
The virtue issuing from the parent's heart,  
Where all the limbs are form'd by nature's hand.

But how the creature reason doth attain, 61  
Thou see'st not yet :—here one more wise than thou  
Hath err'd in doctrine ; taking it as plain  
That from the passive intellect the mind  
Is quite distinct—because he saw not how  
An organ to it could be well assign'd.  
Open thy breast to what I now explain :— 67  
When in the embryo, ere man's life begin,  
Ripens a perfect structure of the brain,  
The primal Mover then the wonders wrought  
By nature sees delighted, and within  
Breathes a new breath, with highest virtue fraught.  
What it finds active there, that it collects 73  
Into itself, and forms one soul alone,  
Which lives, and feels, and on itself reflects.  
And (less to wonder at these words of mine)  
Behold the sun's strong fervour, which, made one  
With the grape's juices, is reduced to wine.  
When Lachesis hath finish'd all her line, 79  
Freed from the flesh, the spirit bears away  
The human powers as well as the divine,  
The others, all, as 'twere, remaining mute—  
Memory, intelligence, and will ;—and they  
Are render'd still more active and acute.

- To one or other bank, without delay, 85  
Falls of itself the liberated sprite,  
Then first acquainted with its future way.  
When to its destined place it doth arrive,  
The informing virtue round it beams, as bright  
As erst around its members when alive.  
And as the air, with rain when laden, seems 91  
As though with various colours it were dress'd,  
Through the reflection of the solar beams;  
Thus doth the circling air that form assume  
Upon it by the stranger soul impress'd,  
Which now arrives to meet its final doom.  
And like unto a flame, which doth pursue 97  
Fire, wheresoe'er it moves to,—even so  
The soul is follow'd by its figure new.  
Since its own image it possesseth, hence  
'Tis call'd a shade, and hence the shades we know  
Are gifted, e'en to sight, with every sense.  
Hence speak we—laugh we ;—hence too it is, we 103  
Or utter sighs, or pour forth bitter tears—  
As through the mount might be perceived by thee.  
Whate'er desires or passions actuate,  
Such is the figure that the spirit wears ;—  
And this the cause thou wonderest so of late."

Now to the final circle we drew near, 109  
And to the right our onward steps inclined,  
While other interest employ'd our care.  
Forth from the bank a flame was seen to play;  
And from the cornice upward rose a wind,  
Which strongly check'd and drove the flame away :  
Whence it behoved us one by one to go 115  
On th' open side ;—here, had I cause to fear  
The flame—there, dreaded to fall down below.  
My guide exclaim'd : “ Now must a tighten'd rein  
Be kept before thine eyes, for know that here  
One erring step we never might regain.”  
Then heard I sung : “ O God of clemency !” 121  
Within the heat intense ; whereat the more  
Impatient was I to turn round mine eye :  
And spirits walking through the fire I view ;  
Whence anxious both their steps and mine to explore,  
My sight was e'en divided 'twixt the two.  
The hymn concluded—“ Not a man I know,” 127  
Aloud they utter ; when they recommence  
The former hymn in accents soft and low.  
This finish'd—they exclaim : “ Within the wood  
Diana kept, and chased Callisto thence,  
With Cytherea's poisonous drugs imbued.”

Then to their song returning, they recite 133  
Examples old of men and women chaste,  
By virtue ruled and sacred nuptial rite.  
And they, I ween, continued in this mood  
During the time the fire their forms embraced :  
Such care is needed, and such sort of food  
To remedy the wound inflicted last.

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**PURGATORY.**

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**CANTO XXVI.**



#### ARGUMENT.

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THE curiosity of the shades to know how Dante's body could cast a shadow.—  
On his informing them he is really alive, Guido Guinicelli addresses him.  
Dante's joy to meet with him, whom he speaks of as his father in poetry.  
Guido points out, and acknowledges the superiority of Arnaud the Provençal,  
for whom he makes room.

## PURGATORY.

---

### CANTO XXVI.

WHILE, one before the other, thus we went 1  
Around the margin—oft the master said,  
“ Look well ; be not in vain my caution lent.”  
The sun advancing struck me on the right ;  
And all the west, by his fair rays o’erspread,  
Was changing now its azure hue for white.  
My shadow made the beams appear to glow 7  
Brighter than wont ;—and at such prodigy  
Came flocking many a shade the cause to know.  
This first it was which to the spirits gave  
Occasion thus to hold discourse of me ;  
“ No fictitious body he appears to have :”

- And some of them, advancing tow'rds me, came 13  
Near as they could—their looks for aye intent  
Lest haply they should pass from out the flame.  
“ O thou who journeyest on behind the rest,  
Perhaps not slower, but more reverent,  
Reply to me, by thirst and fire opprest.  
Not for my sake alone an answer grant ;—  
All these desire it with a thirst more keen 19  
Than Indian who for cooling stream doth pant.  
Say how thou makest of thyself a wall  
Against the sun, as though thou hadst not been  
Caught in the net of death, a captive thrall ?”  
Thus one bespoke me. I had straight my name 25  
Reveal'd, but for the wish I felt to view  
Another novelty ; for lo, there came  
Along the middle of the burning way,  
To meet the first, a second party, who  
Made me draw up, their features to survey.  
On either hand I saw them haste their meeting, 31  
And kiss each one the other—pausing not,—  
Contented to enjoy so short a greeting.  
Thus do the ants among their dingy band  
Face one another,—haply to spy out  
Their neighbours' ways, and how their fortunes stand.

This friendly meeting over—ere they start, 37  
Each party strives the other's voice to drown ;  
The one vociferating on their part—  
“ The cities of the plain ;” while the other cries—  
“ That bliss her monstrous lover's flame might crown,  
Pasiphaë assumed a base disguise.”  
Then like to cranes, that some unto the sands, 43  
And some to the Riphæan mountains fly,  
These from the sun, those from the ice ;—the bands,  
Dividing thus, or come, or haste away,  
As weeping they resume their former cry,  
And their most fitting and appropriate lay.  
And, as before, they unto me drew near— 49  
The same who erst address'd to me a prayer—  
Their looks betraying great desire to hear.  
I, who had twice observ'd their eager mien,  
Began : “ O spirits, ye who certain are,  
Some future day, a state of peace to win—  
Not immature, or by old age subdued, 55  
Are left on earth my bodily remains ;  
But with me I convey both flesh and blood.  
To cure my blindness I ascend this stair ;  
A lady high enthroned such grace obtains ;  
Hence through your world my mortal frame I bear.

But may your highest hopes be shortly crown'd ;            61  
And in heav'n's blessed mansions may ye dwell—  
That heav'n, where love and ampler space abound,—  
As ye inform me who ye are, and who  
That multitude, (so that my page may tell)  
Whom passing yonder at your back I view.”  
Like to an inexperienced mountain clown,            67  
Who round him throws a dumb and stupid gaze,  
When first he visits some well peopled town—  
Such was the image that each shade express'd ;  
But when they had o'ercome that wild amaze,  
Which soon in lofty mind is laid to rest,—  
He that before enquired, began again :            73  
“ O blessed ! who, to live more virtuously,  
Experience of our country wouldst attain,—  
The spirits whom we meet that guilt incurr'd,  
Whence, as he rode in triumph, was the cry—  
The opprobrious cry of ‘ Queen’ by Cæsar heard :  
Wherefore, on parting, ‘ Weep ye,’ they exclaim ;            79  
Themselves rebuking, thus to make the fire  
The more intensely felt, by adding shame.  
Of great enormity our crime,—because,  
Following like beasts our infamous desire,  
We broke the bonds imposed by nature's laws.

That thus our own disgrace may be increased— 85

Departing, we repeat the name of her

Who erst assumed the figure of a beast.

Our actions now thou knowest and our crime ;

Each wouldst thou know by name, and who we were,

I could not tell thee, neither have I time :

But of myself, be fully satisfied ; 91

Guido am I,—allow'd such early grace,

Because I grieved full sorely ere I died."

Like to Lycurgus' sons, when in his sadness

They joy'd to see again their mother's face,—

So great, though not so manifest, my gladness,

When, utter'd by himself, my father's name 97

I heard—the father too of those, who e'er

By their sweet love-songs gain'd them higher fame.

Speechless, and hearing nought, I pensive went

Long time—still looking on his features dear ;

Though close approach the burning flames prevent.

And when with gazing I mine eyes had fed, 103

I offer'd me all prompt to do his will,

With words that might not be discredited.

Then he : " Thy loving speech hath left such trace

Within my breast, that ne'er can Lethe's rill

Obscure the impression, or its stamp efface.

- But, if thy solemn vows believ'd may be, 109  
Say why thy every look and accent bear  
Tokens of love and kindness unto me?"
- "The cause," I said, "is in your pleasant strains,  
Which shall their very characters endear,  
Long as the language now in use remains."
- "Yonder is one, O brother," he exclaim'd, 115  
(And with his finger pointed out a shade)  
"In the maternal tongue more justly famed.  
In lays of love and stories of romance  
He both excell'd, unheeding what fools said,  
Who wish'd the bard of Limoges to advance.  
To rumour, not to truth they lend their ear ; 121  
Thus confirmation to their judgment giving,  
Ere art or reason they consent to hear.  
Many of yore Guittone thus upheld—  
To elevate his reputation striving,  
Till with the greater number truth prevail'd.  
And if thy ample privilege permits 127  
That to the cloister thou mayst now proceed,  
Where Christ the Abbot of the college sits,  
One paternoster say to Him for me,  
As far as we, in this world dwelling, need,  
Where from the power of sinning we are free."

- Then haply anxious to make room for one 133  
Who near him stood, he vanish'd 'mid the flame,  
Like to a fish that dives, and swift is gone.  
Straight, to the shade he pointed out, some space  
I nearer drew, and begg'd to learn that name,  
For which my wish reserved a gracious place.  
“ Such pleasure in thy courtesy I feel,” 139  
With open heart he then began to say,  
“ I neither can nor will my name conceal.  
Arnaud am I, who through this ford of fire  
Go weeping for my follies past—the day  
Already seen which I so much desire.  
Now by that worth which guideth thee on high, 145  
Soon as the fitting time is come, I pray  
That thou assist me in my misery.”  
Then through the cleansing fire he sped away.
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# **PURGATORY.**



## **CANTO XXVII.**

#### ARGUMENT.



IN the hope of obtaining a sight of Beatrice, Dante follows Virgil into the flame. He passes through it unhurt—reposes during night on the steps of a lofty stair—and in a dream sees Leah and Rachel. Reaching in the morning the summit of the stair, Dante is informed by Virgil that he must be his own guide in future, and is directed to remain in a beautiful meadow till the arrival of Beatrice.

## PURGATORY.

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### CANTO XXVII.

THE sun was darting now his earliest beam, 1  
There where his blood his great Creator shed,  
(High Libra sinking under Ebro's stream,  
And noontide fervour scorching Ganges' flood)  
So that where then I was day 'gan to fade,  
When in our presence God's glad Angel stood.  
He stood upon the brink beyond the flame; 7  
And, "Blessed are the pure in heart," he chaunted,  
In voice that mortal clearness overcame;  
Then:—"Pass not on until the fire hath stung,  
Ye holy spirits! enter it undaunted,  
And list attentively to what is sung."

- As we approach'd the Angel, thus he said : 13  
Whereat, his mandate hearing, I became  
Like to a man who in the tomb is laid.  
Upward my hands, together knit, I raised—  
For memory pictur'd burning in the flame  
Those human forms on which I erst have gazed.  
The good conductors turn'd around to me ; 19  
And Virgil said : " Although, my son, 'tis true  
Torture may here exist—death cannot be.  
Remember, oh ! remember ; .....and if I  
On Geryon's back once led thee safely through,  
How much more now—approaching God so nigh?  
Know certainly, that if within this fire, 25  
A thousand years or more thou wert to stand,  
Forth each particular hair should come entire :  
And if perchance thou think'st my words deceive,  
Draw near, and, with thy garment's hem in hand,  
Make trial of it, and thou must believe.  
Cast every fear, cast every fear away ; 31  
Turn hither, and with confidence come on : "  
Still firm, against conviction, did I stay.  
When thus he saw me fix'd and stubborn, he,  
Somewhat incensed, exclaim'd : " Behold, my son,  
This wall divideth Beatrice and thee."

- As Pyramus in death unclosed his eye 37  
At Thisbe's name, and view'd that face so dear,  
(What time the mulberry took its purple dye)  
So, my obduracy subdued, I press'd  
Close to my guide, heard but the name of her  
Which freshly springs for ever in my breast.  
Whereat his head he shook, as thus he said : 43  
" How ! stay we here ?"—then smiled on me, as though  
A child I were, by apples captive led.  
Within the fire then first he took his place,  
Entreating Statius last to enter, who  
Had erst divided us no little space.  
When entered—to relieve me from the heat 49  
I fain had thrown me into liquid glass,  
The rage of the combustion was so great.  
My gracious father held, to comfort me,  
Discourse of Beatrice, as on we pass,  
Exclaiming, " Now I seem her eyes to see."  
A voice beyond conducted us along, 55  
Till, issuing from the flames, we reach'd the stair,  
Attentive only to that heavenly song.  
" Come, O ye blessed of my Father," sounded  
Forth from within a light so dazzling there,  
That its effulgence all my sense confounded.

- "The sun," it added, "sinks, and eve is nigh ; 61  
Linger not here, but swift pursue your way,  
Ere night arriving shrouds the western sky."  
Straight rose our upward pathway through the stone,  
In such direction that I broke the ray,  
Which from the weary sun was feebly thrown.  
And but few steps of that high stair were pass'd, 67  
When we perceived the sun had sunk to rest,  
Since on the ground no shadow now was cast.  
And ere that night had o'er the horizon spread,  
Through all its spacious bounds, her sombre vest,  
And one unvarying hue on all things shed,  
A step his pillow each of us had made ; 73  
For, with the pleasure, e'en the power to climb  
The nature of the mount itself forbade.  
Like goats that, having o'er the crags pursued  
Their wanton sports, now, quiet, pass the time  
In ruminating—sated with their food,  
Beneath the shade, while glows the sun on high— 79  
Watch'd by the goatherd with unceasing care,  
As on his staff he leans with watchful eye ;—  
And like a shepherd who, the night throughout,  
Dwells by his peaceful flock i' th' open air,  
Watching lest beasts should put them to the rout ;

Thus on the pavement all we three were lying— 85

I—like a goat, and like to shepherds they,—

The rock, on either side, a flank supplying.

But little from without appear'd in sight ;

And yet sufficed that little to display

The stars more large than usual, and more bright :

Thus ruminating, and on these intent, 91

Sleep seized me—sleep, which oft, presaging, knows

Of things to come, or ere arrives the event.

It was the hour, when on the mount, I deem,

Her early radiance Cytheræa throws,

She who for ever burns with love's warm beam,—

When, in a dream, a lady fair and young 97

Methought I saw, advancing o'er a mead,

And flowers collecting, as these words she sung :

“ Be it known to any who my name demands,

That I am Leah, thus, as I proceed,

Weaving a garland with these beauteous hands.

I deck me for my pleasure at the glass ; 103

But Rachel from her mirror never stirs,

Before it wont the live long day to pass :

She takes delight in viewing her fair eyes,

And contemplation's placid joys are hers ;

While mine from active occupation rise.”

Now broke the streaks that tell the approach of day, 109  
    (Grateful to pilgrims most, who spurn repose,  
    Returning home, upon their lessening way)  
And on each side the shadows vanish'd o'er me—  
    My slumber with them ; when I quickly rose,  
    Seeing the mighty masters risen before me.  
“ That most delightful fruit, of which in quest 115  
    Man searches through so many boughs with care,  
    This day shall lull thy keen desire to rest : ”  
These words from Virgil with delight I heard ;  
    Nor was there ever boon, how sweet soe'er,  
    That pleasure equal unto this conferr'd.  
Desire upon desire to climb the height 121  
    So came upon me, that, each step I gain'd,  
    I felt the wings expand to aid my flight.  
Swiftly we mounted up the ascent ; and when  
    The summit of the stair we had attain'd,  
    Virgil regarded me with earnest ken,  
And said : “ The fires both temporal and eterne, 127  
    Son, hast thou seen ; now in a place art thou,  
    Where I, unaided, can no more discern :—  
Thus far with art and skill thy steps I've urged.  
    Take then thy pleasure for thine escort now—  
    Forth of the steep and narrow ways emerged.



Behold the sun upon thy forehead thrown— 133

Behold the trees, the flowers, of every hue,

In this most happy soil spontaneous sown.

Here mayst thou stray, or rest beneath the shade,

Till, bright with joy, those eyes shall greet thy view

Which, erst suffused with tears, implored my aid.

No more from me expect or sign or word : 139

Thy will henceforth is upright, free, and sound ;

To slight its impulse, were a sin ;—then lord

Be o'er thyself,—be mitred, and be crown'd."



**PURGATORY.**



**CANTO XXVIII.**

#### ARGUMENT.



ARRIVING at the summit of the mountain, Dante enters the forest of the terrestrial Paradise. On the opposite bank of the river Lethe, he beholds Matelda gathering flowers as she sings. She explains the properties of the fruits belonging to this delicious region.

## PURGATORY.

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### CANTO XXVIII.

EAGER that heavenly forest to survey, 1  
Whose living verdure, grateful to the eye,  
Temper'd the fervour of the new born day—  
Waiting no more, I left the rocky bound,  
Over the plain proceeding tardily,  
Whose fragrant soil breathed odours all around.  
A pleasant air that ever blew the same, 7  
Soft as the impulse of a gentle wind,  
With mild impression o'er my forehead came;  
By which the leaves, all trembling as they were  
Before the zephyr, to that side inclined  
Where shadows from the mountain first appear.

- ' Yet they were not so bent before the breeze, 13  
But that the little birds in many a throng  
Their several arts continued 'mid the trees ;  
And, full of gladness, as they pour'd their throats,  
Hail'd the sweet hours of prime, those leaves among,  
Which kept harmonious murmur with their notes ;  
E'en such a murmur, as from bough to bough 19  
Runs through the piny grove on Chiassi's shore,  
When Eolus lets loose Sirocco.—Now  
With tardy steps had I advanced such space  
Within that ancient forest, that no more  
The point where I had enter'd could I trace.  
And lo, a stream my further course denied, 25  
Which, on the left hand, with its little wave  
Bent down the herbage springing at its side.  
All water here on earth, most pure and bright,  
Some mixture in them would appear to have,  
Compared with this, concealing naught from sight.  
And yet it moved in darkness on its way, 31  
Dark, in the depth of that perpetual shade  
Which sun or moon ne'er pierced with entering ray.  
I check'd my steps, and travell'd with mine eye  
Across the rill, to view the trees array'd  
In all their fresh and rich variety.

And there appear'd to me (as, sudden brought 37

To view, some startling object has the power  
Through wonder to divert each other thought)

A lady all alone ; who roved about

Singing, as she selected flower from flower,  
With which her pathway painted was throughout.

“ O beauteous lady, who full surely art 43

Irradiate with the fire of love's own beam,  
If I may trust those signs that speak the heart,

Be it thy pleasure to approach so near,”

I thus address'd her, “ towards this pleasant stream,  
That I the purport of thy song may hear.

Fair Proserpine thou to my mind dost bring, 49

And that most beauteous meadow where she roved,  
When, by her mother lost, she lost the spring.”

Like to a lady turning in the dance,

Foot before foot from earth so slightly moved  
That scarce perceptible is her advance ;—

So 'mid those flow'rets of the richest dyes, 55

Crimson and gold, to me she turn'd around,  
Like virgin fair who veils her modest eyes,

And by her presence satisfied my prayer ;—

Approaching me so near, that with the sound,  
I caught the meaning of her heavenly air.



- “ This stream,” I answer’d, “ and this leafy sound      85  
    With what I lately heard, both disagree ;  
    And the discordance doth my mind confound.”  
“ The reason of thy wonderment,” she said,  
    “ More fully will I now relate to thee,  
    And clear the mist that is around thee spread.  
The Good Supreme, who in himself alone      91  
    ‘ Delighteth, made man good, and gave this place  
    A pledge of endless peace :—the fault his own,  
If in such blessed realm his stay was short,—  
    Choosing a life of sorrow and disgrace  
    Instead of virtuous smiles and gladsome sport.  
That all the changes which on earth arise      97  
    Through exhalations of the land or sea,  
    Continually ascending to the skies,  
Might not disturbance here to man create,  
    High is the mountain rear’d ; and hence is free  
    From change, within the limits of the gate.  
Now, since the air all moves in circling course,      103  
    Obedient to the primal impulse given,  
    Unless restrain’d in part by casual force ;  
Thus doth the living air that flows around  
    This lofty region, in strong current driven,  
    Run through the leafy wood with murmuring sound.



Thence a new power derive the smitten leaves ; 109  
And this, imparted to the circling breeze,  
On all sides round is carried :—hence conceives,  
By powerful influence wrought, the nether earth ;  
And, as the soil and clime dispose, to trees  
Of various kind and quality gives birth.  
No marvel then—the fact explained—if there 115  
Some novel plant in future should take root,  
Whose seed may not to human sight appear :  
For know, the sacred ground on which we stand  
Bears plants spontaneous, and each sort of fruit,  
Not pluck'd from trees that grow in yonder land.—  
The streams thou seest spring not from earthly vein, 121  
Supplied by mists which reconverted fall,  
Like rill that spent renews its strength again ;  
But issue from a never-failing source,  
Replenish'd by the will of God with all  
They pour on either side along their course :  
On this hand, able—such the power assign'd— 127  
To take away all memory of sin ;  
On that—to call each virtuous deed to mind :  
This, Lethe named—that Eunoe :—but until  
The streams on either hand have tasted been,  
They fail their proper object to fulfil.

All other flavours this doth far excel ; 133  
And though no more I should explain to thee,  
Thy former thirst may sated be full well.  
A corollary will I add beside ;  
Nor will my words, I deem, less pleasing be,  
Should more than I have promised be supplied.  
The bards whose fabling verse in ancient time 139  
Painted the age of gold, the state of bliss,  
Dreamt in Parnassus of this heavenly clime :  
For here man's race was innocent ;—here spring  
Perpetual blooms, with every fruit,—and this  
The nectar of whose praise all poets sing.”  
I turn'd around again to either bard, 145  
And in their countenances saw betray'd  
The smile with which her closing words they heard ;  
Then bent my sight upon the beauteous maid.

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# **PURGATORY.**



## **CANTO XXIX.**

#### ARGUMENT.



THE poet keeps pace with Matelda along the opposite bank of the river Lethe.  
The forest is illuminated by a sudden flash, and a delicious melody is heard.  
A procession follows, in which a triumphal car is drawn by a griffon.

## PURGATORY.

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### CANTO XXIX.

As though by love inspired—her heavenly lay                   1  
Continued to its close that lady fair ;  
“Blessed are those whose sins are wash'd away :”  
And like to nymphs advancing one by one  
Along the sylvan shades—with studious care  
Some to avoid, and some to meet the sun ;  
So she against the river upward went                         7  
Along the bank ; and I with her kept pace,—  
By her short step to measure mine intent.  
Not fifty paces had we made our way,  
When both the banks took such a turn—my face  
Caught the reflection of the eastern ray.

Nor had we far at equal distance sped, 13  
    When in a moment turning round to me,  
    “Look, brother, look, and hear,” the lady said.  
And lo ! shot suddenly throughout the wood  
    A flash of such surpassing brilliancy,  
    Methought it must be lightning that I view’d.  
But because lightning with the speed it came, 19  
    Departs, while this grew more and more intense,  
    “ What can it be ?” I to myself exclaim.  
Then through the glowing air melodious ran  
    A strain, so ravishing to mortal sense,  
    Indignant I bewail’d the fall of man ;—  
That when both heaven and earth obedient were, 25  
    Woman alone, and she but just created,  
    Refused the veil of ignorance to bear ;  
To which had she submitted patiently,  
    Oh how extended, how much antedated  
    Had been these joys ineffable !—While I  
Was wandering such primæval fruits among 31  
    Of the Eternal Love, in thought profound,  
    And on the hope of further pleasures hung ;—  
Before us, ’neath the verdant boughs appear’d  
    The air on fire ; and what seem’d first a sound,  
    Distinctly now in sweetest songs was heard.

- O holy Virgius, for your sake if I 37  
Have ever suffer'd hunger, watching, cold,  
Now grant your aid in my necessity.  
Through me let Helicon pour her springs ;  
And may Urania's choir divine unfold  
Verse suited to my high imaginings.  
A little further on I seem'd to view 43  
Seven trees of gold, which at such distance lay,  
That though unreal, they appear'd as true.  
But when I came so near, that I could trace  
The form whose general semblance led astray,  
(Its lineaments no more obscured by space)—  
That power which unto reason speech supplies 49  
Seven candelabra recognized, and e'en  
Could hear the strain "Hosanna."—On mine eyes  
Their trappings fair with more effulgence shone,  
Than doth the moon, when 'mid the blue serene  
She walks at midnight in her highest noon.  
With an admiring and astonish'd gaze 55  
I turn'd to Virgil ; and the bard replied  
By look no less expressive of amaze.  
Those glorious things I then again survey,  
Which moved so slowly tow'rd us, that a bride  
Had e'en outstripp'd them on her nuptial day.

The lady cried to me : “ Why is thy mind 61

So wholly on those living lustres stay'd,

"That thou regardest not what comes behind?"

'They seem'd to be the leaders of a band

That follow'd them behind, in white array'd :

Such whiteness ne'er was seen in mortal land.

The water sparkled with the living beam, 67

And on the left, as in a mirror, gave

My form reflected in the glassy stream.

When onward to a distant spot I drew,

Where nought divided us except the wave,

I check'd my steps to gain a clearer view ;

And saw the flames, advancing, leave the air 73

Painted behind them ; and they seem'd to glide

As if e'en banners drawn along they were :

So that seven streaks remain'd above, which shone

With the same colours all diversified

Whence Phœbus' bow is form'd and Delia's zone.

Those streamers, further than mine eye could reach 79

Were floating ; and, to guess of the outmost two,

Ten paces separated each from each.

Under so beautiful a canopy

Twenty-four elders then approach'd in view,

By pairs, their temples crown'd with fleur-de-lis.



“ O blessed, thou,” they sang, “ above the rest      85  
Of Adams daughters! Thou who art endued  
With beauty, mayst thou evermore be blest !”  
Soon as the flowers and herbage fresh, that deck’d  
The bank opposed to that on which I stood,  
Were liberated from that troop elect ;  
As light in heaven succeeds to light, so now      91  
Four animals succeeded to them close ;  
And round their heads each wore a verdant bough.  
Each with six wings was plumed ; and every plume  
Was full of eyes—such eyes as would be those  
Of Argus, could they life again assume.  
To paint their forms, more rhymes I cannot spare ;      97  
For other matter urges me—so strong,  
That on this subject I must needs forbear.  
But read Ezekiel, who describes their course,  
As from the north he saw them come along,  
With cloud, and fire, and whirlwind’s sweeping force :  
And such was their appearance here, as he      103  
Describes them, save the pinions—these St. John  
Makes somewhat different, and agrees with me.  
The space within the four a car contain’d,  
Which, to a Gryphon’s neck attach’d, moved on,  
By two triumphal wheels above sustain’d.

Aloft, between the central list and those 109  
On each side three, his either wing he rear'd ;  
And from the flapping thus no harm arose.  
So high they mounted that they baffled sight :  
His limbs were gold as far as he was bird ;  
And with vermillion mix'd the rest were white.  
Her Africanus Rome graced not of yore, 115  
Or her Augustus, with a car so fair ;  
And e'en the sun's compared with it were poor ;—  
That, which, borne headlong from its custom'd road,  
Was erst consumed at Terra's fervent prayer,  
When Jove mysteriously his justice show'd.  
At the right wheel in circling dance there came 121  
Three damsels ;—one so ruddy, that, to view,  
She scarce had been distinguish'd 'mid a flame.  
The second's flesh and bone appear'd as though  
Of emeralds they were fashion'd ; and in hue  
The third was like to newly driven snow.  
The white now took the lead, and now the red ; 127  
The rest meanwhile kept measure with her song,  
Or swift or slow, as one or other led.  
All festive on the left danced other four,  
In purple clad, at beck of one among  
The band, who three eyes in her forehead bore.

Close in the rear of these, I now descried 133  
Two aged men in different garbs array'd ;  
But like in manner—grave and dignified.  
One seem'd as if he a disciple were  
Of great Hippocrates, whom nature made  
For sake of those she holds on earth most dear :  
Quite opposite the other's aim appear'd, 139  
With sharp and shining sword ; and though I stood  
On this side of the stream, I greatly fear'd.  
Then saw I four approach of humble guise ;  
And in their rear an aged man I view'd,  
Who, rapt in vision, seem'd to close his eyes.  
And like the four and twenty were array'd 145  
The latter seven, save that by these were worn  
Roses, and other vermeil flowers, instead  
Of lilies, which adorned the former ;—so  
That one at little distance would have sworn  
Their heads were wrapt in flame above the brow.  
And when the car was opposite, I heard 151  
A thundering sound ;—and this most worthy band  
From further progress seem'd to be debarr'd,  
And with the first bright ensigns took their stand.

# **PURGATORY.**



## **CANTO XXX.**

#### ARGUMENT.



**BEATRICE** descends from heaven, and at her coming Virgil disappears. Placing herself in the celestial car, she reproves Dante. Then, addressing the Angels, she laments that he had not turned his fine natural qualities to good account, but after her death had abandoned the right path, and given himself to others.

## PURGATORY.

## CANTO XXX.

WHEN the septentrion of that heaven sublime  
 (Which neither set nor rise hath ever known,  
 Nor veil of other cloud save that of crime,  
 And which e'en now was pointing out to each  
 The road of duty, like the lower one,  
 That tells the pilot how the port to reach)  
 Was firmly fix'd—anon those spirits blest,  
 Who 'twixt it and the Griffon first had ta'en  
 Their station, to the car, as to their rest  
 Turn'd; and lo, one, as though from heaven he came,  
 "Come, Spouse from Lebanon," in lofty strain  
 Thrice cried, and all the others did the same.

- At the last summons as the just shall rise 13  
Each from his cavern, and, with voice again  
Endued, sing Hallelujahs ;—in like guise,  
Obedient to such holy mandate given,  
On the celestial chariot sprang amain  
A hundred angel ministers of heaven.
- “ O blessed thou who comest,” they all cried ; 19  
“ Scatter we lilies with unsparing hand ;”  
And flowers the while they threw on every side.  
Erewhile the eastern regions have I seen  
At day-break glow with roseate colours, and  
The expanse beside all beauteous and serene ;
- And the sun’s face so shrouded at its rise, 25  
And temper’d by the mists which overhung,  
That I could gaze on it with stedfast eyes ;—  
E’en so, encompass’d in a cloud of flowers,  
Which upward by angelic hands were flung,  
And all about the chariot fell in showers—
- In veil of white, with olive chaplet bound, 31  
A maid appear’d, beneath a mantle green,  
With hue of living flame enrobed around.  
And now my spirit (which for many a day,  
Unused to feel her presence, had not been  
O’ermaster’d by sensations of dismay)

Felt, though she was not fully manifest, 37  
    (Such secret virtue from her person flow'd)  
    How strong the love that erst my soul possess'd.  
Soon as mine eye perceived that glorious ray,  
    With which in former times my bosom glow'd,  
    Ere boyhood yet had wholly pass'd away,  
I turn'd unto the left,—e'en like a child, 43  
    That to its mother runs with panting breast,  
    When hurt, or into dangerous path beguiled—  
To say to Virgil: "Flows not through my frame  
    One drop of blood that trembles not:—confest  
    Are all the traces of my ancient flame."  
But Virgil now had vanish'd from my side— 49  
    Virgil—my father, most revered, most dear—  
    Virgil—on whom for safety I relied.  
Nor could the sight of all in evil hour  
    Lost by our primal mother, check the tear,  
    Which o'er my cheeks now flow'd in ample shower.  
"Dante weep not that Virgil leaves thee here— 55  
    Weep not as yet; for know, another sword  
    Of sharper edge shall cause thee many a tear."  
E'en as an Admiral with searching ken  
    Inspects his vessels when he comes aboard,  
    And by his look encourages his men;



- So on the left of the celestial car 61  
    (When at the sound of mine own name I turn'd,  
    Which here I am compell'd to register)  
The lady, whom beneath a drapery  
    Of flowers angelical I late discern'd,  
    Cast from beyond the stream her eyes on me ;  
Although the veil, that from her brow descended, 67  
    Girt by Minerva's leaf around her head,  
    From clearer view her beauteous form defended.  
With regal air, and look, wherein disdain  
    Was pictur'd still, proceeding thus, she said  
    (Like one who doth her bitterest taunt retain) :  
" Yes, I am Beatrice ; regard me well :— 73  
    And hast thou deign'd at last to ascend the mount,  
    Where joys unspeakable for ever dwell ?"  
In the clear water fell mine eyes below ;  
    But, imaged there, I drew me from the fount ;  
    Shame so oppressive settled on my brow.  
And as the mother to the son appears 79  
    Haughty—thus haughty she appear'd to me ;  
    Since sharp the flavour harsh compassion bears.  
She ceased : when sudden the angelic throng  
    Chaunted ; " My hope, O Lord, hath been in thee ;"  
    But with " my feet," concluded they their song.

As snow congeals upon the living masts 85  
Along Italia's ridge, when blown upon  
And harden'd by the strong Sclavonian blasts—  
Then, melts into its former self once more,  
Like wax before a flame dissolved anon,  
When breathes the gale from Afric's ardent shore ;  
Thus stood I, unrelieved by sighs or tears, 91  
Till came the notes of those unto mine aid,  
Who sing in concert with the eternal spheres.  
But when I heard in their sweet measures flow  
More pity than if even they had said :  
" Wherefore, O lady, dost thou grieve him so ?"  
The ice with which my heart was girt around 97  
Dissolved ; and, gushing forth from out my breast,  
In sighs and tears a painful passage found.  
She, firmly standing then upon the right  
Of the celestial car, her speech address'd  
To those most holy substances of light.  
" Ye keep your vigils in the eternal day, 103  
So that nor night nor sleep may from you steal  
One step the passing age makes on its way ;  
Whence I my answer frame more carefully,  
That he who weeps on yonder bank may feel  
A grief to equal his iniquity.

Not only through those mighty wheels' effect, 109  
That, subject unto planetary power,  
Each seed unto a certain end direct ;  
But through the bounty of celestial graces,  
Which vapours of such lofty influence shower,  
Our eyesight fails on earth to mark their traces ;—  
In early life so nobly form'd was he, 115  
Each virtuous germ implanted in him, would  
Have flourish'd in a marvellous degree :  
But soil untill'd and void of goodly seed,  
The more with native vigour 'tis endued,  
The more malignant yields the noxious weed.  
Long time my look sustain'd him :—to his sight 121  
The lustre of my youthful eyes displaying,  
I led him with me in the path of right.  
Scarce had I reach'd life's second state, when he  
Betook himself to others—rashly straying  
From better guidance, and forgetting me.  
Soon as from earth my soul had wing'd her flight, 127  
With beauty and with virtue more endow'd,  
Less dear was I, less pleasing in his sight.  
His steps he turn'd into an erring way,  
Pursuing empty images of good,  
Which promise fair, but ever lead astray.

Nor inspirations ask'd for him avail'd, 133

By which in dreams I fain would him recall ;

Such slight regard he paid them :—wholly fail'd

The means I often used (so low he fell)

To ensure his safety and redeem his fall,

Save leading him throughout the rounds of Hell.

Hence went I to the entrance of the dead, 139

Imploring one his guidance to assay,

To whom my prayers with many a tear were made.

God's high decree had been infringed, if he

Had pass'd and tasted Lethe on his way,

Unless he suffer'd first the penalty,

Which tears and a sincere repentance pay."

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**PURGATORY.**

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**CANTO XXXI.**

#### ARGUMENT.



**BEATRICE** again directs her discourse to Dante. Her reproofs cause him to swoon and fall to the ground. When restored to himself, he is dipped by Matelda in the waters of the river Lethe, and drawn to the other bank. Beatrice re-appears.

## PURGATORY.

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### CANTO XXXI.

“THOU whom beyond the sacred stream I see,”— 1

Thus quickly she began her speech anew,  
Turning forthwith its point direct on me,  
Although full sharp the side alone had seem'd,—

“Answer me ; is this accusation true ?

By free confession be the fault redeem'd.”

Confusion so o'erwhelm'd me at the sound, 7

The words expired within my lips, ere they  
Had through the organs their expression found.  
Awhile she paused ; then : “Answer me,” quoth she ;  
“For not yet have the waters wash'd away  
The mournful traces from thy memory.”

Fear and confusion, mixt together, drew 13  
Forth from my lips an answering "yes," so faint,  
That to perceive it, sight was needed too.  
As breaks a bow before the arrow flies,  
When both the wood and cord are overbent,  
And to the mark the shaft more feebly lies ;  
Beneath this heavy burden so I quail'd, 19  
Pouring forth sighs and tears, a bitter flood ;  
And, ere the words had reach'd my lips, they fail'd.  
Whence she resumed : "To thwart those high desires  
Instill'd by me, which bade thee love that Good,  
Noblest to which the soul of man aspires—  
What interposing trenches didst thou find, 25  
What chains,—that thus, deprived of liberty,  
All hope of further progress was resign'd ?  
And what attraction, what advantages  
In other foreheads were perceived by thee,  
That taught thee those to choose instead of these ?"  
After the drawing of a bitter sigh 31  
My lips with difficulty answer made,  
And scarce had power to fashion a reply.  
Weeping, I said : "My steps were turn'd aside  
By the false pleasure present things display'd,  
Soon as your face was to my view denied."



- “ Hadst thou been silent, or refused to own                    37  
Thy fault,” she said, “ it had not ’scap’d our ken ;  
By One omniscient the offence is known.  
When tears however, gushing forth, allege  
Self-accusation by a sinner ; then  
In this our court the wheel rebates the edge :  
But that more shame may expiate thy crime,                    43  
And with more strength thy soul may be endued,  
Thrill’d by the Syren’s voice another time,—  
Dismiss the source of tears, and hear from me,  
How wholly contrary the effect that should  
By my decease have been produced in thee.  
No lure to equal those fair limbs of mine,                    49  
Now unto dust return’d, did ever art,  
Or nature, to attract thine eyes, design :  
And if with charm of such supreme delight  
Thy doom it was, at my decease, to part,  
What mortal thing should have allured thy sight ?  
At the first shaft that struck thee from the bow                    55  
Of treacherous things, thou shouldst have soar’d above,  
Pursuing me, not frail, as when below.  
Became thee not to stoop thy pinion down  
To wait fresh snares—some youthful maiden’s love,  
Or other vanity, as quickly gone.

These, the young bird may twice or thrice forget ;      61  
But in the view of those full-plumed, his aim  
The fowler takes in vain, or spreads his net.”  
As little children, with their eyes bent low,  
Stand listening—mute, through consciousness of shame,  
Convicted and repentant ;—even so  
I stood ; and she resumed : “ Since but to hear      67  
Afflicts thee, raise thy beard, and let thine eyes  
Witness a cause of sorrow more severe.”—  
With less resistance by the root is torn  
Some sturdy oak, when northern blasts arise,  
Or those from Afric’s land, impetuous borne,  
Than lifted I my chin, as she directed ;      73  
For when instead of ‘ face’ she said my ‘ beard,’  
I knew the venom that her speech infected :  
And, stretching out my face, beheld those fair  
Primæval creatures, which before appear’d,  
Cease from the sprinkling of the flowers they bare.  
And I, though scarcely was restored my sight,      79  
Saw Beatrice admire that form divine,  
Which in itself two natures doth unite.  
On the green bank—her veil around her cast—  
Seem’d she still more her former self to outshine,  
Than, while on earth, all others she surpast.

Repentant stings so struggled in my soul, 85  
I contemplated now with hate and shame  
All that erst sway'd me with supreme control.  
Such keen remorse was kindled in my breast,  
I swoon'd away ; and what I then became  
She knows, whose mighty presence I confest.  
Soon as my heart fresh vigour had supplied, 91  
The lady, whom before I found alone,  
I saw above me :—" Hold—keep hold," she cried ;  
Then drew me to the stream ; and as she bore  
My sinking form, her way she quickly won,  
Light as a shuttle, that dark water o'er.  
Nearing the sacred bank—came on mine ear 97  
" Asperges me" in strain so passing sweet,  
Recall I cannot, much less write it here.  
The beauteous lady straight, her arms extending,  
Embraced my head, and plunged me where 'twas meet  
That I should taste the wave ;—then, lowly bending,  
She raised me up, and offer'd me, so laved, 103  
Within the circle of the maids benign,  
Who, as they danced, their arms around me waved.  
" Nymphs are we here below, and stars in heaven ;  
To Beatrice, ere from her seat divine  
She hither came, were we for handmaids given.

- We to her eyes will lead thee ;—but to bear 109  
The joyous light within, shall yonder three,  
Profound of ken, thy visual sense prepare.”  
Singing melodiously, commenced they thus ;  
Then to the Griffon’s breast conducted me,  
Where Beatrice was standing, turn’d to us.  
“ Now satisfy,” they said, “ thy anxious view ;— 115  
Thee have we placed before the emeralds bright,  
Whence Love erewhile his shafts against thee drew.”  
A thousand longings more intense than fire  
Mine eyes attracted to those eyes of light,  
Fixt on the Griffon with profound desire :  
And in them, like unto the sun pourtray’d 121  
Within a glass, the twofold thing was beaming—  
His either nature there by turns display’d.  
Think, reader, what surprise was mine, to see  
An object in itself so tranquil seeming  
Bear in its image such diversity.  
Whilst, fill’d with deepest wonder and delight, 127  
My soul was tasting of that heavenly food,  
Which, satisfying, wakes new appetite,  
The other three irradiate forms advance :  
How great their rank their high demeanour show’d ;  
And songs accompanied their angel dance.

“Turn, Beatrice, O turn” (this was their song) 133

“Thy holy eyes unto thy faithful one,

Who hath, to view thee, made such journey long.

Do thou at our entreaty here reveal

Thy smile to him, and make thy beauty known—

That second beauty thou dost now conceal.”

O splendour of eternal living light ! 139

Who, though grown pale beneath Parnassus' shade,

Or wont to quaff the rills from his fair height,

Would not betray the mental strain, should he

Attempt to picture thee, thou peerless maid,

When, shrouded 'mid celestial harmony,

Thy charms in all their glory were display'd ?

**PURGATORY.**



**CANTO XXXII.**

#### ARGUMENT.



DANTE, in company with Matelda and Statius, follows the procession of the blest to a tree whose boughs dilate as they ascend. After a hymn, Dante falls asleep, and is awakened by a flash of splendour. Beatrice tells him to observe the car, and, on his return to earth, to record all he sees. After various transformations, the car is drawn out of sight into the wood.

## PURGATORY.

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### CANTO XXXII.

BENT were mine eyes with ardour so intense 1  
To sate their ten years' thirst, that all the while  
Lost in oblivion was each other sense :—  
On either side of these a wall was set,  
To exclude aught else ; so did that sacred smile  
Again enthrall them with its ancient net ;  
When towards the left my looks were forcibly 7  
Diverted by those Nymphs, on hearing one  
Exclaim, addressing me : " Too earnestly."  
And a sensation of o'erpowering light,  
As when the eyes are dazzled by the sun,  
Deprived me for some moments of my sight.



But when my vision was in part renew'd, 13  
So that mine eyes were able to discern  
Objects less splendid than those lately view'd,  
I saw that on the right that glorious host  
Had wheel'd around ; and, making now a turn,  
Before the flames and sun took up their post.  
E'en as a troop, beneath their bucklers ranged 19  
For greater safety, turn on either hand,  
Ere their direction can be wholly changed ;  
So now, of that celestial armament  
Pass'd onward in like guise the leading band,  
Ere the triumphal car its beam had bent.  
Then to the wheels those Nymphs themselves betaking, 25  
The Griffon moved his blessed burden thence,  
Although so gently, not a plume was shaking.  
The beauteous maid who drew me o'er the tide  
Follow'd the wheel of less circumference,  
By Statius and myself accompanied.  
As thus we pass'd throughout the lofty wood, 31  
Void through the fault of Eve, in unison  
With angel notes our journey we pursued.  
About the distance that an arrow, thrice  
Loosed from the string, might compass, had we gone,  
When from the car descended Beatrice.

Then "Adam" mutter'd by them all I heard ; 37  
And in a circle round a tree they went,  
Whose every bough of leaves and flowers was bared.  
Its head, which, as it rises, doth dilate  
The more, so lofty grows, that wonderment  
In Indians 'mid their groves it would create.  
"Blessed, O Griffon ! art thou not to rend 43  
This tree, which needs must be surpassing sweet,  
Since it allured our parents to offend."  
Thus cried they, as they circled round the tree ;  
And he in whom the twofold natures meet :  
"Yea, so fulfill'd all righteousness must be."  
Then to the chariot's beam straight turning round, 49  
He drew it to the tree bereft of spray,  
And left it, by a twig together bound.  
As when from heaven descends the glorious light,  
Mingled with that which, when the Pisces' ray  
Departs, beams forth with more effective might,—  
Our plants swell out, and re-enliven'd are 55  
Each with its proper colour, ere the sun  
Unite his steeds beneath some other star ;  
Thus tints less vivid than the rose, but more  
Deep than the violet, that plant put on  
Which of its foliage was so stript before.

- The words they sang I could not comprehend ; 61  
For not to earth belong'd their melodies,  
Nor did I hear their notes unto the end.  
Could I but sing how heavy slumber weigh'd,  
At tale of Syrinx' woe, th' unpitying eyes,  
That dearly for their high distinction paid,—  
Like one who from a model draws, might I 67  
Depict the manner of my slumber deep ;  
But to describe it, whoso can, may try.  
Passing to when I woke, hence tell I, how  
A flash of splendour burst the veil of sleep,  
A voice too, crying : " Rise ; what doest thou ?"  
As, (led to view the flow'rets of that tree 73  
For whose delicious fruit the Angels pine,  
In heaven a source of ceaseless jubilee,)  
Turn'd back the Apostles Peter, James, and John,  
From sleep awaken'd at the word divine,  
By which had deeper sleep been overthrown ;  
And witness'd straight their little band grow less— 79  
Moses departed and Elias too—  
And their great Master alter'd in his dress ;—  
So I awoke, and saw that pitying maid  
Stand over me—my kind conductress—who  
Along the river had my footsteps led.

- And, "Where is Beatrice?" in doubt I cried. 85  
    "Beneath the tender leaves behold her there,  
    Upon the root reclining," she replied ;  
"Behold the maidens who her form surround :  
    Following the Griffon, mount the rest in air  
    With sweeter minstrelsy and more profound."  
Whether to greater length her words were brought 91  
    I know not, since before mine eyes was she  
    Who barr'd the entrance to each other thought.  
Alone she sate upon the open ground,  
    As though the car were in her custody,  
    Which there the twofold animal had bound.  
Into a circle form'd themselves anon 97  
    The Nymphs, those lights supporting in their hands  
    Which Auster toucheth not or Aquilon.—  
"Brief space this forest shall thy dwelling be ;  
    And in that Rome where Christ himself commands  
    Shalt thou for aye be citizen with me.  
Whence, that the evil world some good may learn, 103  
    Look on the car, and all that meets thine eye  
    Forget not to record, on thy return."  
These words spake Beatrice ; and I, resign'd  
    To execute her will implicitly,  
    E'en as she bade, applied my eyes and mind.

Ne'er from thick cloud, by force ethereal riven,                   109  
    With such velocity was lightning sent,  
    When falling from the farthest bound of heaven ;  
As swoop'd the bird of Jove impetuous down  
    Straight through the tree, by which the bark was rent ;  
    Much more the leaves and foliage newly grown.  
He struck the car with all his force, whereat                   115  
    It quail'd, like vessel tempest tost, and driven  
    Now by the waves on this side, now on that.  
Then up into the vehicle I view'd  
    A she-fox leap, to greediness so given,  
    She seem'd rapacious of all goodly food.  
But chiding her for this unseemly deed                   121  
    My lady put her to such rapid flight,  
    Her skinny bones could scarce endure the speed.  
Then from the quarter whence he came before,  
    The Eagle swoop'd into the chariot bright,  
    And left it with his feathers cover'd o'er.  
And such a voice as issues from a heart                   127  
    Grief stricken, came from heaven ; and thus it said :  
    “ Oh, how ill freighted, little bark, thou art ! ”  
Then seem'd it that the earth did gape betwixt  
    The wheels ; and thence in sight a Dragon sped,  
    Which, turning up its tail, the car transfix'd.

And like a wasp that draweth back its sting, 133  
So, drawing back his venom'd tail, he rent  
Part of the car, and fled with joyous wing.  
And as the earth with herbage is renew'd,  
So the remainder an integument  
Form'd of the feathers,—with intention good  
Haply presented ; and as rapidly 139  
Were both the pole and wheels therewith o'erspread,  
As the lips open to express a sigh.  
The sacred structure, thus diversified,  
Through every part of it put forth a head ;  
Three at the pole and one on either side.  
Horns the first three, like unto oxen, bore ; 145  
One single horn the four among them rear'd ;  
Nor was such monster ever seen before.  
Firm as a rock upon some mountain high,  
A wanton damsel seated there appear'd,  
Who threw on every side a wandering eye :  
And lest she should be carried from that height, 151  
A giant sitting close to her I view'd ;  
And oft they kiss'd each other in my sight.  
But when with mine her roving eyes did meet,  
Her dread companion lash'd her in fierce mood,  
E'en from the head unto the very feet.

Then did he loose the beast, with anger keen                   157  
    Incensed, and through the wood such distance drew,  
    The boughs alone afforded ample screen  
To hide the damsel and the monster new.

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# **PURGATORY.**



## **CANTO XXXIII.**



#### ARGUMENT.



BEATRICE reveals the future destiny of the tree, and desires Dante to bear record. He is conducted by Matelda to the river Eunoe. Having tasted its waters, he returns so pure and regenerate, that he feels capable of mounting to the stars.

## PURGATORY.

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### CANTO XXXIII.

“ O GOD, the heathen,” thus the holy train, 1  
    (Alternate now the three and now the four)  
    Weeping, in their sweet psalmody began.  
And Beatrice was listening, so subdued  
    By pity, that scarce Mary's features wore  
    More signs of grief, when at the cross she stood.  
But when the other virgins had given place 7  
    For her to speak, she raised herself upright,  
    And answer'd to their words with glowing face :  
“ A little while—ye shall not me behold ;  
    And yet again, O sisters, my delight,  
    A little while, and me ye shall behold.”

Then all the seven in front of her she set, 13  
And, beckoning unto me, a wish convey'd  
That I should follow, with the sage, who yet  
Remain'd, and that fair damsel ;—thus she went :  
Nor had she, I believe, the tenth step made,  
Advancing, when her eyes on mine were bent ;  
And with a tranquil look she said ; “ Come near, 19  
That, should I be inclined to speak to thee,  
Thou mayst be able my discourse to hear.”  
When, as in duty bound, I had complied,—  
“ Why, brother, not attempt to question me,”  
She added, “ as thou journeyest by my side.”  
As those, who, moved with too much reverence, strive 25  
To speak in presence of their betters, so  
That to the lips comes not the voice alive ;  
Thus it befel me, that scarce audibly,  
“ O lady,” I began, “ my wants ye know,  
And can a fitting remedy supply.”  
And thus she answer'd : “ Banish shame and fear ; 31  
That not like his who talketh in a dream  
Henceforth the tenor of thy words appear.  
Know that the vessel which the serpent hurt,  
Was, and is not : nor let the offender deem  
That by a sop Heaven's wrath he may avert.

Without an heir the eagle not for aye 37  
Shall be, who left his feathers in the car,—  
Whence it became a monster—then a prey :  
I see full surely—therefore I declare—  
The approach of constellations, from all bar  
And hindrance free, bringing a season near,  
Wherein, One,—stamp'd five hundred ten and five,— 43  
God's Angel—shall destroy the thievish dame ;  
Her giant partner too of life deprive.  
And haply my narration, dark, like those  
Of Sphinx or Themis, credit may not claim,  
Since o'er the mind, like them, a cloud it throws :  
But soon, this hard enigma to explain, 49  
The events shall be the Œdipus ; nor blade  
Or flock therefrom shall injury sustain.  
Mark thou ;—and ever, as I spend my breath,  
Be these my words to those alive convey'd  
Whose life is but a constant race to death.  
And when thou writest, tell what thou hast seen 55  
Relating to this memorable tree,  
Which twice already there despoil'd hath been.  
Whoever rends it, or commits abuse,  
Offendeth God by act of blasphemy,  
Who made it sacred, solely for his use.

Through tasting it, five thousand years and more 61  
    Yearn'd the first soul in longing and in woe  
    For Him who in his flesh the penance bore.  
Thy reason sleeps, unless it seem to thee  
    For some especial cause inverted so,  
    And rear'd to heaven with such sublimity :  
And had not idle thoughts wrought in thy mind 67  
    As Elsa's stream ; and their false pleasures been  
    A Pyramus to cloud it, thou wouldst find  
God's justice plainly evidenced to thee ;  
    And in these circumstances would be seen  
    The moral of the interdicted tree.  
But since thine intellect is turn'd to stone, 73  
    And so obscured by sin, that at the glare  
    Of these my words 'tis dazed and overthrown,  
Bear them along with thee, if not express'd,  
    Sketch'd out at least ; like pilgrim wont to bear  
    His staff, returning home, with palm-leaf dress'd."  
Then I : " As wax th' impression doth retain, 79  
    Which from the seal imprinted it derives,  
    E'en so by thee is stamp'd my very brain.  
But wherefore doth thy wish'd for converse soar  
    Above my eyesight, which, the more it strives  
    To reach the summit, loses it the more ?"

“The school which thou hast follow’d,” she replied, 85

“I wish thee to discern, and see how far

Its lore falls short in following me thy guide ;

And see how distant from the path divine

The ways of man—as distant e’en as are

From earth those heavens which most exalted shine.”

“I cannot recollect,” I answer’d her, 91

“Any estrangement in my love for thee ;

Nor doth my conscience tell me that I err.”

“If then” (she with a smile this answer gave)

“Thou canst not call it to thy memory,

Think how thou lately tastedst Lethe’s wave :

And as from smoke fire surely is inferr’d, 97

So of a will enticed away elsewhere

Doth this oblivion prove the guilt incurr’d.

Truly my words as naked now shall be,

As haply may thine eyes be fit to bear,—

Not wont such mighty mystery to see.”

With more resplendence, and with slower pace 103

The sun on the meridian mounted high,

Whose aspect varies with the change of place—

When, as a scout sent out before a band

Draws up, on seeing aught of novelty ;

E’en thus the seven fair damsels took their stand

- At the far limit of a death-like shade— 109  
Like that beneath black boughs and foliage green  
O'er the cool streams in Alpine glens display'd.  
Springing before them from the self-same source  
Methought were Tigris and Euphrates seen,  
Like friends, each loth to take a separate course.  
“ O light, O glory of the human race, 115  
What water this, which flows with double tide  
Forth from one fount, borne hence thro' distant space?”  
To my request was made this answer : “ Pray  
Matelda to inform thee.”—Then replied  
(Like one who somewhat in excuse would say)  
The beauteous maid : “ By me were told to him 121  
Both these and other things ; and sure am I  
That Lethe's water hath not made them dim.”  
Then Beatrice : “ Perhaps some weightier care,  
Which often-times destroys the memory,  
Hath made the intellectual eye less clear.  
To Eunoe's fount do thou direct his course, 127  
And, as thou art wont, revive his overthrown  
And drooping virtue in its crystal source.”  
Like to some gentle soul, that frameth no  
Excuse, but makes another's will her own,  
At the first signal given her ;—even so

Advanced the beauteous lady, soon as she 133  
My hand had taken ; and with courteous air  
To Statius said : “ Do thou accompany.”  
Had I, O reader, space to write—in part  
At least, then would I sing that beverage rare,  
Whose sweetness ne’er had satisfied my heart :  
But since the leaves, to this my second strain 139  
Allow’d, are full—no longer be pursued  
The theme, and art restrict me with her rein.  
From that most sacred water back I came  
Regenerate, like plants that are renew’d  
With foliage fresh,—made pure throughout my frame,  
And with a will to climb the stars endued.

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## NOTES.

## NOTES.

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### CANTO I.

1. *O'er the smooth waters of a milder sea  
The light bark of my genius hoists her sail.*

DANTE, having left behind him the "cruel sea" of the Inferno, (108) prepares to sail over the milder waters of the Purgatorio.—The metaphor is continued in the Paradiso. (ii. l.) Spencer makes use of the same.—*Fairy Queen*, book i. c. 12, st. 1.

"Then eke my feeble bark awhile may stay,  
Till merry wind and weather call her hence away."

7. *Wake into life the deaden'd notes again.*

Dante, invoking the Muse, calls upon her to inspire fresh life into his poetry, which having been employed in singing of Hell, "the kingdom of the dead," is supposed to have become deadened. Calliope was invoked by Virgil. (*Æn.* ix. 525.)

"Vos O Calliope, precor aspirate canenti!

Et meministis enim, Divæ, et memorare potestis."

"The style of the poet immediately assumes a splendour and a serenity adapted to his subject. His metaphors are all taken from smiling objects."—*Ginguené, Hist. Lit. d'Italie*, c. ix.—"Hence that calm delight with which the soul will be soothed from the first to the last of this canticle."—*Ugo Foscolo, Discorso*.

11. *Which, to the wretched Picæ when it came.*

The Picæ, daughters of Pierius, having challenged the Muses to sing, were defeated, and changed into magpies for their presumption. (*Ovid, Met. v.*)

13. *Sweet colours that with orient sapphire shone.*

"Dolce color d'oriental zaphiro,  
Che s'accoglieva nel sereno aspetto  
Del aer puro infino al primo giro,  
Agli occhi miei ricominciò diletto."

Beautiful is the simplicity of the Italian. Dante describes his entrance into the confines of Purgatory, before daybreak, when the sky began to be streaked with light. The purity of the atmosphere is contrasted with the deadly air of the *Inferno*, which had caused him such severe mental as well as bodily affliction. "Primo giro," (line 15) is translated "highest circle," on the authority of Lombardi, supported by the Paduan Editor.

19. *The beauteous Star, to love and lovers dear,  
Was making all the orient laugh.*

In the twenty-seventh canto (line 94), Venus, as a morning star, is thus described.

"It was the hour when on the mount, I deem,  
Her early radiance Cytherea throws,  
She who for ever burns with love's warm beam."

23. *And there beheld four planets on the right.*

These stars, being in the antarctic pole, could not be seen except in the southern hemisphere. But Purgatory being antipodal to Jerusalem, according to our poet's supposition, and the terrestrial paradise situated on the summit of the mountain, these stars would

be visible to our first parents, before the fall :—for, as they are symbolical of the four cardinal virtues (Prudence, Justice, Temperance, and Fortitude), they could only be seen by man in a state of innocence. Hence the lamentation of the poet over the widowed inhabitants of the northern pole or hemisphere (line 26)—“addressed,” says the writer of the *Ottimo Commento*, “to the wicked who are in the *Inferno*.” That four very beautiful stars, however, are actually visible in the southern heavens is well ascertained. (See Paduan edition.) The famous Amerigo Vespucci was the first to speculate upon the extraordinary mention of them by Dante at a time when so little was known of another hemisphere. A doubt may well exist whether Dante received some information of these stars through Marco Polo, who returned from his voyage in 1295, a few years before the *Divina Comedia* was written ; or whether, as Lorenzo Giacomini suggests, “by mere force of enthusiasm he hit upon a truth so remote from the knowledge of his time.”

### 31. *Near me I saw an aged man alone.*

Cato of Utica :—selected for his office by the poet in imitation of Virgil. (*Æn.* viii. 670.)

“*Secretosque pios, his dantem jura Catonem.*”

That Dante entertained the highest opinion of him is evident from passages in his *Convito*. “E quale uomo terreno piu degno fu di seguitare Iddio che Catone ? Certo nullo.” Again : “O santissimo petto di Catone, chi presumera di te parlare ?” “Learning from Dante himself that his *Inferno* is a description of this our erroneous life, and arguing the same of his *Purgatorio*, I believe that Cato is a symbol of that true liberty which is acquired by subduing our passions and cleansing ourselves from all vice.”—*Biagioli*. (See Introduction, and Note to *Inf.* ii. 132.) “Religious liberty, according to its more genuine acceptation, is the liberty which commands internal peace, into whatever state of anxiety or distress man may be thrown, and emancipates him

from the most tyrannical bondage under which he can groan—his own undisciplined, unimproved, unsanctified nature.”—*Quarterly Review*, No. 105, p. 201.—Cato, as Lombardi observes, is here placed, not as guardian of Purgatory, but of its outskirts. (See Note, line 79, and Canto vii. 38.) Dante, therefore, is not obnoxious to the blame imputed to him, of making Cato the guide of spirits to Paradise, which he himself was incapable of reaching. The bright vest assigned to him at the day of judgment (line 75) is not therefore to be considered other than a robe with which those destined to Limbo will be endued at that time. Cato’s face is represented (line 73) as lit up with the rays of virtue emanating from those four hallowed stars which the poet had just observed in the southern hemisphere.

(The propriety of the word tresses, as applied to a male, being questionable, it may be well to quote the authority of Rogers.—*Pleasures of Memory*, part i. 125.

“ We led the wandering beggar on his way :  
Bare were his feet—his tresses silver grey.”)

40. *Tell who are ye, that stemming the dark tide.*

*i. e.* The dark winding rivulet against which the poets made their way up from Hell, “ the eternal prison.” (See *Inf.* xxxiv. 130.) “ How have ye,” he says, “ who were once the servants of sin, been able to escape from your prison house ?”

43. *Who was the guide and lantern to your track.*

“ Thy word is a lantern unto my feet, and a light unto my paths.”—*Psalms* cxix. By “ profoundest night,” is meant the inveterate habit of sin. By the valley, the “ vale of woe.” *Inf.* iv. 7.

53. *At Her request who dwells enthron’d in heaven.*

Beatrice.—See Introduction to *Inf.* p. xv.

58. *Never did he behold life's latest eve.*

That this expression is intended to designate the death of the soul, and not of the body, is evident from what follows.

76. *By us unbroken are the laws of Hell.*

Virgil having answered two of Cato's questions, now answers the third (line 46). "My companion," says he, "is still alive; and I, though a spirit, am not subject to Minos (see *Inf.* v. 4.), i. e. am not condemned to Hell, but resident in Limbo.

79. *Where the chaste eyes of thy loved Marcia still.*

"Da fœdera prisce  
Illibata tori; da tantum nomen inane  
Connubii: liceat tumultu scripsisse, Catonis  
Martiæ." *Lucan, Phars. ii. 344.*

This appeal to Martia, his wife, was intended to flatter Cato. (See his answer, line 92.) Another compliment seems intended in the following lines, where Cato is said to be entrusted with the care of the kingdoms or circles of Purgatory. His government was in reality confined to the outskirts of Purgatory. Purgatory itself is guarded by an Angel. (See ix. 104.)

88. *Now, since she dwells beyond the evil tide.*

"The evil tide"—the river Acheron (*Inf.* iii. 70). "The other side"—Limbo (*Inf.* iv. 44). "The law ordained"—the change of affection ordained to accompany change of place. Cato is supposed to be among those spirits who were delivered from Limbo by our Saviour. (See Note, *Inf.* iv. 53.)

96. *So that from every stain he may be freed.*

The stain to be removed from Dante's face was contracted during

his journey through the Inferno. The "great Minister" (line 98), is the Angel who guards the gate of Purgatory. (ix. 104.)

104. *None there, whose harden'd stem disdains to bend.*

This is best illustrated by a stanza from *Isaac Walton*, cap. xvi. —the reed (*humile pianta*) being an emblem of humility.

"Hail bless'd estate of lowliness!  
Happy enjoyment of such minds  
As, rich in self contentedness,  
Can like the reeds in roughest winds  
By yielding make that blow but small,  
At which proud oaks and cedars fall."

119. *Like one who would retrace his wilder'd way.*

The poet was bewildered in the dark wood (*Inf.* i. 3.), and was returning by the deserted plain to the way of virtue, nearly obliterated through the ill example of the Popes, as fully explained hereafter. (xvi. 100, &c.)

131. *That never witness'd his return, who dared.*

In allusion to Ulysses—who is said to have perished in an attempt to navigate the Atlantic; out of which the mountain of Purgatory is supposed to rise. (See *Inf.* xxvi. 100.)

136. *Spontaneous in the selfsame spot upgrew.*

"Primo avulso non deficit alter  
Aureus; et simili frondescit virga metallo."  
*Virg. Æn.* vi. 113.

## CANTO II.

1. *Now that horizon had the sun attain'd.*

Various indices are used by Dante, according to the notions and geography of those times, to show that as the sun was setting at Jerusalem, it was rising in the antipodes to that place, viz. in the mountain of Purgatory.

25. *My master spoke not till the forms of light*

*First seen, were known for wings, now fully spread.*

The two white objects which (line 22) arose, one on either side of this Angel (here called "forms of light"), prove on his nearer approach, to be his wings. "Apparser ali" is the reading adopted, instead of "aperser ali," the common reading—thus making clear a passage otherwise obscure. The white object which subsequently arose (line 24), is the dress of the Angel. Thus, as would be the case on seeing him approach from a distance, his face first—his wings next—and lastly his white robes appear. He is called "the Pilot" (line 27), as conducting spirits to Purgatory over the sea—his wings forming a sail to the boat (line 32).

44. *"Blessed" inscribed on his celestial brow.*

"And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads."—*Rev.* xxii. 4. See also *Rev.* xiv. 1. The psalm (line 46) "When Israel came out of Egypt, &c." is the 114th. "Most appropriately is this psalm sung by the spirits on their arrival at Purgatory—having escaped the bondage of sin, and now on their way to Paradise, the land of promise."—*Landino.*



79. *O shadows, save in outward aspect, vain !  
Three times around his form my hands I threw ;  
As oft return'd they to my breast again.*

Imitated from Virgil, *Æn.* ii. 790.

" Hæc ubi dicta dedit, lacrymantem et multa volentem  
Dicere deseruit, tennesque recessit in anras.  
Ter conatus ibi collo dare brachia circum ;  
Ter frustra compressa manus effugit imago,  
Par levibus ventis, volucrique simillima somno.

So Æschylus describes the illusion of a dream. (*Agamemnon*, 412.)

" Μάραν γάρ, εἴτ' ἂν ἰσθλα τις δοκῶν ὄρῃν,  
Παραλλάξασα δια χειρῶν  
Βίβακιν ὄψις ὅν μεθύστερον  
Πτεροῖς οπαδοῖς ἔπνου κελύθοις."

86. *Then knew I who he was, and pray'd that he.*

Casella—an excellent musician, and an intimate friend of Dante, who took great delight in his songs. (See line 91.)

93. *But thy arrival, why so long delay'd ?*

Dante expresses his surprise that Casella, who had been dead some years, was only now arriving at Purgatory. Casella answers, that the will of the Angel, who had denied him an earlier passage, depended on the will of God, and therefore must not be inquired into :—that he was, however, received into the vessel, when he directed his face towards the Tiber (i. e. the Church of Rome), whither the Angel was returning to fetch a new cargo of spirits. Casella, dying contumacious, was unable to obtain a passport to Purgatory. But during the great jubilee held by Pope Boniface in 1300 (see note to *Inf.* xviii. 29), i. e. three months before (line

98), he availed himself of the prayers offered up for all souls not irrevocably doomed to Hell.

112. *'Love that within me speaks.'*

*'Amor che nella mente mi ragiona.'*

The first line of one of Dante's own sonnets in the *Convito*.—Casella thus not only complies with Dante's request, but courteously selects one of his own songs. The love here mentioned is that of virtue and truth. Milton has noticed this interview.—(Sonnet xiii. 12.)

"Dante shall give Fame leave to set thee higher  
Than his Casella, whom he wooed to sing,  
Met in the milder shades of Purgatory."

115. *Such full contentment that illustrious sage,  
And all the souls around him testified.*

"At cantu commotæ Erebi de sedibus imis  
Umbre ibant tenues, simulacraque luce carentum."  
*Virgil, Georg. iv. 471.*

120. *How now, ye lingering souls? Why here so long?*

"It often happens that though we intend to rid us of our vices, some frail earthly delight holds out a bait, which tempts us for a while to turn our backs upon the one thing needful; but presently Cato, *i.e.* the love of liberty, reproves us, and urges us forward to complete our purification."—*Landino.*

## CANTO III.

1. *Soon as dispersed throughout the holy plain.*

The plain means the level ground at the foot of the mountain.

8. *O noble conscience, upright and refined.*

Cato had reproved the spirits at the conclusion of the last canto for their delay in ascending the mountain. This reproach the tender conscience of Virgil takes to himself, as well he might, when it is considered how frequently he lectures Dante for wasting time.

12. *On one sole object erst intent.*

*i.e.* My mind, which had before been wholly engaged in listening to the song of Casella, now enlarged its aim to a contemplation of the mountain of Purgatory. Lombardi gives a different interpretation—viz. that he had been occupied with his fears of losing Virgil.

19. *Seeing a shadow from my form alone.*

Dante, not considering Virgil was a spirit, expected to see his shadow on the ground as well as his own, and on perceiving only one, imagines himself abandoned.

31. *True, heavenly wisdom hath our frames disposed.*

*i.e.* Providence hath ordered that our bodies should, like those of man, be susceptible of heat and cold; but it must not be supposed that they are on that account impervious to the rays of

the sun :—a mystery (like that of the Trinity) not for man to inquire into. Had the ways of God been known to our first parents, and why the apple was forbidden, they would not have listened to the temptations of Satan, and superinduced the necessity of our Saviour's incarnation (line 39) in order to obtain their redemption.

40. *Men have ye known who thus desired in vain.*

*i. e.* Plato, Aristotle, &c., who spent their lives in speculation as to the nature of the supreme Good. "Had they," says Virgil, been humble minded, instead of endeavouring to pierce the counsels of God, they would ere this have been blessed with the sight of His face (*i. e.* have been admitted into Paradise); whereas they are now condemned to suffer in Limbo the torment of unsatisfied curiosity, without the hope of ever gratifying their wishes." Of this number of philosophers was Virgil himself. (*Inf.* iv. 42.) Hence his perturbation, and the abrupt conclusion of his speech. His argument is this: "O mortal race, if such great intellects have fruitlessly busied themselves in the investigation of the divine ways, how much more will ye labour in vain."—*Torelli*.

50. *'Twixt Lerici and Turbià, is a stair.*

Two places in the mountainous country of Genoa.

56. *His mind intently pondering o'er the road.*

"Esaminando del cammin la mente.

This passage is translated on the authority of Biagioli. "Virgil's mind," he says, "was wholly wrapt up in reflecting upon the means of overcoming the difficulties of the road, as is evident from what follows,—where the poet designedly and with great art makes Dante, who was looking about him, alone take cognizance of the troop of spirits approaching."

60. *Their feet were moving, so composed their pace.*

"The tardiness of these people is intended to designate the manner of their life on earth, negligent and remiss in performing meritorious actions."—*Ottimo Commento*.

72. *Like one in doubt, who stops to gaze awhile.*

"These spirits, seeing the two travellers coming to them in an opposite direction—a thing wholly new—are struck with astonishment; and retreating to the side of the mountain, stand at gaze in doubt and alarm."—*Biagioli*.

79. *And e'en as sheep forth issue from the fold.*

"If one sheep should throw himself down a precipice of a thousand feet, all the rest would follow; and if one, for any cause, in passing a road should leap, all the rest would leap, though they saw nothing to leap over."—*Convito*.

100. *Thus spoke the master: "Turn, and enter first."*

*i. e.* Enter the cave or grotto, mentioned before (line 90).

107. *Fair was he, handsome, and of noble air.*

Manfred—King of Naples and Sicily. On the invasion of Italy by Charles of Anjou, he was defeated and killed at Beneventum in 1265.—In explanation of the remainder of the canto, the following extract from Sismondi is given. "Dante is accosted by Manfred, the natural son of Frederick II. and the greatest prince who has filled the throne of the two Sicilies. He enjoins Dante to seek his daughter Constance, wife of Peter III. of Arragon, and mother of Frederick, the avenger of the Sicilians, for the purpose of satisfying her as to his doom, and dissipating the painful doubts which the

Pope and the priesthood had excited. Not contented with persecuting him during his life, with defaming his character, and precipitating him from his throne, they took upon themselves to pronounce the sentence of his eternal damnation. His body was torn from the grave and exposed on the banks of a river, as that of a rebellious and excommunicated son of the Church. Yet the Divinity, whose mercy is not as the mercy of man (see line 122), hath accepted him, pardoned him, and given him promise of an eternity of bliss :—neither the malediction of the priests, nor the imposing forms of excommunication possessing power to deprive sinners of the benefits of infinite love. It was thus that this singular poem might be said to convey tidings from parents to their children, and to afford ground for hopes, by giving, as it were, an authentic description of the state of the soul after dissolution.”  
—*Italian Literature. Roscoe's Translation.*

121. *My sins were horrible, I must aver ;  
But such wide arms hath Goodness infinite.*

Manfred led a dissolute life, and is reported to have slain his father and brother. But the truth of this story may be questioned, when it is considered with what commendation he is spoken of by our poet in his *De Vulg. Elog.* i. 12. Mercy, the attribute of God, is here beautifully described. The metaphor may well be applied to him who said : “ Come unto me, all ye who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”

Petrarch has imitated Dante in this passage.

“ Quelle pietose braccia  
In cui io mi fido, veggio aperte ancora.”

And Shakspeare has beautifully treated the same sentiment.—  
(*Merchant of Venice*, act iii.)

“ The quality of mercy is not strain'd ;  
It droppeth as the gentle dew from heaven  
Upon the place beneath,” &c.

124. *Cosenza's shepherd, by Pope Clement sent.*

"Because Manfred died under sentence of excommunication, King Charles would not have his body brought into consecrated ground, and he was buried at the foot of the bridge of Beneventum. A stone was thrown by every soldier in the army upon the trench, so that a great mound was raised. But it is reported that by command of the Pope (Clement IV.), the Bishop of Cosenza took his body thence and carried it out of the kingdom, because it was church land; and he was buried by the side of the river Verdi."—*Villani*, lib. vii. cap. 9.

130. *The wind now sweeps them, when the rain  
hath drench'd.*

"Nunc me fluctus habet, versantque in littore venti."

*Virgil, Æn. vi. 362.*

The "quench'd torches" (line 132) denote deprivation of the customary honor of lights at interment.—"Their fell curses" (line 133), "refer to Pope Clement and the Bishop of Cosenza, or to priests in general."—*Lombardi*. "Their curses," continues Manfred, "are ineffective, while there is hope of obtaining the favor of God."

140. *Rove thirty times as long; unless such date.*

"Nec ripas datur horrendas nec rauca fluentes

Transportare prius, quam sedibus ossa quierunt.

Centum errant annos, volitantque hæc litora circum:

Tum demum admissi stagna exoptata revisunt."

*Virgil, Æn. vi. 320.*

The "ban" (line 144) alludes to the prohibition to enter Purgatory till after the period appointed to the excommunicated.

## CANTO IV.

5. *And this refutes the error which maintains.*

Plato and others maintained that man had three souls—the vegetative, the sensitive, and the rational. Were this true, Dante argues, the employment of one faculty would not prevent the exercise of another, as was the case with him on the present occasion. So intent had he been in listening to Manfred, that he perceived not how the day had advanced.

25. *Down may one go to Noli, or on high.*

“ Vassi in Sanleo, e discendesi in Noli  
 Montasi su Bismantova in cacume  
 Con esso i pie; ma qui convien ch'uom voli.”

“ These lines, to which the generality of readers pay no attention, are worthy of much notice for the beauty of the words, of the numbers, and of the sentiment they contain. By the difficulty of ascending the hill, the poet intends to point out to us the exertion required, on escaping from vice, to enter the narrow gate of penitence.”—*Biagioli*. Noli, a city in the territory of Genoa.—Bismantua, a steep mountain in that of Rhégium.—Sanleo, a fortress on the summit of Montefeltro.—The expression “ man ” (uomo), in this passage (as also in line 90), shows that the poem refers to this world.

42. *Than through mid quadrant line to centre traced.*

*i. e.* The ascent was nearly perpendicular—“ greater, compared with the plain, than an angle of 45 degrees.”—*Costa*.

57. *To see how from the left his beams arise.*

“ He wonders, that, sitting with his face to the east, he should



have the sun on his left ; since in Europe, and in all countries on this side the Tropic of Cancer, he who faces the east sees the sun on his right."—*Lombardi*. Lucan is here quoted by Vellutello. (*Phars.* iii. 247.)

" Ignotum vobis, Arabes venistis in orbem,  
Umbras mirati nemorum non ire sinistras."

61. *Whereat he said: " If the twin brothers were.*

" The constellation of Gemini is nearer to the Bears than Aries. Hence, if the sun, instead of being in Aries, had been in Gemini—both the sun and that portion of the Zodiac made " ruddy " by the sun, would have been seen to wheel nearer the Bears."—*Lombardi*. By the " pathway old " is meant the Ecliptic.—" The sun is called a mirror, since it pre-eminently reflects the light of the Supreme Being."—*Costa*.

68. *Imagine Sion with this mountain high.*

*i.e.* Consider that mount Sion and this mountain of Purgatory are antipodal to each other, having the same horizon, but different hemispheres ; so that the sun, journeying along the Ecliptic (" that path which Phæton ill knew "), must needs rise alternately on opposite sides of the respective mountains.

82. *Runs northward for the reason given.*

" The Equator and Ecliptic seem to those in the northern hemisphere to run south ; and to those in the southern hemisphere north."—*Boyd*.

93. *As in a boat the gliding down a stream.*

" Come a seconda in giuso andar per nave."

" Denoting the growing facility of virtuous habits."—*Boyd*.

106. *And one, who seem'd by weariness oppress.*

His name was Belacqua, as appears v. 123—an excellent musician, but of very indolent habits. In accordance with this character he made the remark (line 98), that before Dante had reached the end of his journey he might find it necessary to sit down and rest. His portrait is drawn to the life in the following lines.

114. *"Now brave one, mount the ascent!"*

Belacqua had overheard Dante pointing him out to Virgil by his lazy attitude, and retorts ironically: "Now brave one!" This taunting strain he continues, on Dante's approaching nearer:—"Hast learnt," &c. in allusion to the ignorance Dante had betrayed in his enquiry (line 57) as to the unusual appearance of the sun.

123. *Belacqua, now for thee hath ceased my grief.*

*i. e.*, "The grief your death occasioned me, vanishes, on finding you in this place of salvation."—*Lombardi*. (See viii. 64.)

130. *Whirl'd must I be without these boundaries.*

Because he delayed repentance till the period of his death, he is condemned to wander about on the outskirts of Purgatory for a period equivalent to thirty times the space of his disobedience on earth, unless relieved by the prayers of good men. (See iii. 140.)

139. *Over Marocco's coast her foot hath spread.*

Marocco, or Mauritania, is mentioned as bordering on the hemisphere of Jerusalem. Being midnight there, it was midday in Purgatory.

## CANTO V.

16. *He in whose breast springs thought to thought  
succeeding.*

The same idea is expressed in the *Inferno*, ii. 37.

"And like to one who swerves from his intent,  
Changing his purpose as fresh thoughts succeed,  
Till his original design is spent," &c.

24. *Who verse by verse the Miserere sung.*

*i. e.* The 51st Psalm. "Have mercy upon me, O God, after thy great goodness; according to the multitude of thy mercies do away mine offences. Wash me thoroughly from my sins and put out all my misdeeds," &c.

36. *To honour one who may good service do.*

"He might render himself serviceable by bearing news of them to their relations, and requesting them to offer up prayers that the period of their sufferings might be shortened."—*Vellutello*.

38. *The heaven so swiftly pierced by meteor's flame.*

"Sæpe etiam stellas, vento impendente, vidcbis  
Præcipites cælo labi, noctisque per umbram  
Flammarum longos a tergo albescere tractus."

*Virgil, Georg.* i. 365.

65. *Although thou swearest not," one spirit said.*

Jacopo del Casero—a citizen of Fano, who having scandalized Azzone III. ("him of Este," line 77) was assassinated by his orders at Oriaco, near Padua, where he thought himself safe from his enemy.

74. *By great Antenor I received the blow.*

The city of Padua—as we are informed by Virgil, *Æn.* i. 243.

"Antenor potuit mediis illapsus Achivis  
Illyricos penetrare sinus, atque intima tutus  
Regna Liburnorum, et fontem penetrare Timavi;  
Unde per ora novem vasto cum murmure montis  
It mare proruptum, et pelago premit arva sonanti.  
Hic tamen ille urbem Patavi sedesque locavit  
Teucrorum, et genti nomen dedit."

88. *My name Buonconte—Montefeltro's son.*

"Buonconte was son of Guido, Count Montefeltro, whose history we have in the *Inferno* (xxvii. 67). Buonconte, fighting against the Guelfs was killed, and his body never found. Hence the poet feigns the description that follows.....Campaldino is a plain in the Casentine, at the foot of the mountain of Poppi, where the battle took place.....The Archiano—a river which runs into the Arno, between Poppi and Bibbicna, where it loses its name."—*Landino*. Giovanna, his wife, he says, cares not to offer up prayers for him, to expedite his entrance into Purgatory, and he therefore implores the assistance of Dante.

104. *God's Angel claim'd me; but Hell's demon dread.*

A similar dispute was held in the *Inferno* (xxvii. 112) between St. Francis and the Devil, as to their right over the soul of Guido,

the father of this Buonconte.—“ The Devil carried the point, arguing it in due form.....and accordingly bears Guido's soul to Hell.....Guido is carried off by the Devil on the ground that the Pope had not, and could not have, the power of absolving him ;—a power which many contend the Pope has. Buonconte is carried to Paradise by the Angel, although he was excommunicated by the Pope.”—*Panizzi, Romantic Poetry of the Italians.*

107. *For that one tear of penitence he shed.*

“ Oh ! is it not thus thou man of sin,  
The precious tears of repentance fall ?  
Though foul thy fiery plagues within,  
One heavenly drop hath dispelled them all.”  
*Moore, Lalla Rookh—Paradise and the Peri.*

112. *That evil one (his evil will combined  
With intellect).*

A similar passage occurs in the *Inferno*, xxxi. 55.

“ For when the noble faculty of mind  
To power is added, and to ill design,  
No remedy can man against them find.”

126. *And from my breast that hallow'd cross unbound.*

*i.e.* The cross which he had made, when dying, by folding his arms across his breast.

133. *Me, who am Pia, to remembrance bring.*

“ Nello della Pietra had espoused a lady of noble family at Sienna, named Madonna Pia. Her beauty was the admiration of Tuscany, and excited in the heart of her husband a jealousy, which, exasperated by false reports and groundless suspicions, at length drove him to the desperate resolution of Othello. It is difficult to decide

whether the lady was quite innocent, but so Dante represents her. Her husband brought her into the Maremma, which then, as now, was a district destructive to health. He never told his unfortunate wife the reason of her banishment to so dangerous a country, as she did not deign to utter complaint or accusation. He lived with her alone, in cold silence, without answering her questions or listening to her remonstrances. He patiently awaited till the pestilential air should destroy her health. In a few months she died. Some chroniclers, indeed, tell us that Nello used the dagger to hasten her death. It is certain that he survived her, plunged in sadness and perpetual silence. Dante had in this incident all the materials of ample and very poetical narrative; but he bestows on it only four verses. Yet these few words draw tears from those who know the fate of this young woman. Her first desire, to be called to the remembrance of her friends on earth is very affecting. Her modest request, her manner of naming herself, and of describing the author of her sufferings without any allusion to his crime, and merely by the pledges of faith and love which attended their first union, are deeply pathetic. The soft harmony of the last verses, full of gay and tender remembrances, forms a most striking contrast with the idea of domestic unhappiness, of death, and of cruelty, which must rise in the reader's imagination." *Ugo Foscolo, Edinb. Rev. No. 58, art. Dante.* This story of his being "plunged in sadness and perpetual silence," seems doubtful. It is said that he afterwards married the Countess Margerita (see *Tomasi, Storia di Sienna*); and it appears probable that he calumniated and put to death the unhappy Pia, in order to obtain the hand of the rich and beautiful Countess. (See *Gigli. Diar. Sanese*, as cited by the Paduan Editor.) That Pia was put to death secretly is evident. She says her husband alone knew how.

## CANTO VI.

"The whole of this canto may be considered as the most beautiful among those composed by Dante relative to the disasters of his country."—*Ugo Foscolo, Discorso*, p. 182. "To make us understand (line 1) how great was the crowd of spirits around him, and the means he took to rid himself of them, Dante introduces a comparison of the crowd that attends the winner at the game of dice, and of the method by which he extricates himself, *i.e.* by giving them a part of his gains. So, Dante says, he acted, partly granting the requests of the spirits, and partly promising to obtain for them the prayers of their friends in the world below."—*Lombardi*.

13. *He of Arezzo, who the mortal blow.*

Among those who implored favourable mention when he returned to earth, Dante mentions the following:—Benincasa of Arezzo, who, acting as Judge in Sienna, put to death the brother of Ghino di Tacco, a noted robber, and was in revenge assassinated:—Cione de' Tarlati (line 15) a powerful Aretime, who in battle was carried by his horse into the Arno and drowned:—Frederico Novello (line 16), son of Count Guido da Battifolli, slain in battle:—Farinata di Scornigiani of Pisa (line 18); on occasion of whose murder, his father, one of the Frati Minori, displayed his fortitude and christian forgiveness—exhorting his kinsmen to reconciliation as he followed the funeral, and, as some say, kissing the hands of the homicide:—Count Orso da Cerbaia (line 19); said to have been slain by his uncle:—Peter de la Brosse (line 20), secretary and counsellor to Philip the Fair of France. Of his influence the courtiers were so jealous, that they prejudiced the Queen, Mary of Brabant, against him, and prevailed on her to accuse him of an attempt upon her chastity, for which supposed crime he was put to death. Dante warns the Queen to expiate her guilt, lest she be sent to Hell instead of Purgatory.

29. *Denial to the doctrine," I began.*

Dante, addressing Virgil, says: "It seems to me that somewhere in your poem a doctrine is held contrary to that entertained by these spirits, who hope to obtain pardon by the intercession of their friends." The text alluded to is that in the *Æneid* (vi. 376), "*Desine fata Deûm flecti sperare precando*,"—and "was uttered in Hell," answers Virgil, "where no prayers can avail."

37. *For Judgment stoops not from His lofty seat.*

The flame of love refers more particularly to the charitable prayers of good men offered up for the souls in Purgatory. But let a slight change be made in the last line, and in a single stanza is explained clearly the most important doctrine of our religion.

For Judgment stoops not from His lofty seat,  
Though love's warm flame in one short moment may  
That ransom work we should ourselves complete.

47. *She, blest and joyous, on the verdant height.*

The epithets "*rideute e felice*," apply naturally to Beatrice. Having so applied them originally in my translation, I have not been since induced by the arguments of the commentators to apply them to the mountain.

62. *O Lombard soul! thy countenance bespoke!*

Sordello (see v. 75)—"a celebrated Troubadour, born at Goito, near Mantua, in the service of Raymond Brenger. He was among the first to adopt the ballad form of writing, and his merit consists in the harmony and sensibility of his verses. The age of Sordello was that of the most brilliant chivalric virtues and the most atrocious crimes.....He united, according to popular report, the most brilliant military exploits to the most distin-



gnished poetical genius. By the voice of St. Louis himself he had been recognized at a tourney, as the bravest of knights. His reputation is owing very materially to the admiration here expressed for him by Dante, who is so struck with the noble haughtiness of his aspect that he compares him to a lion in a state of majestic repose." (*Sismondi. Ital. Lit. Roscoe's Trans.*)—"Like to a lion when he lies at rest." ("A guisa di leon quando si posa.")—"Dante paints a great character by his inaction. Sordello had led a very active life, and after having made every effort for his country, died, despairing of the fate of Italy.—While a crowd of ghosts, curious about the affairs of the world, followed the poet to learn news of him, Sordello kept aloof. Dante had not before named him, nor does he give any reason for his disdainful silence."—*Ugo Foscolo. Edinburgh Review*, No. 58.

72. "*Mantua*"—*the spirit, so abstracted late.*

Virgil, in answer to Sordello's enquiry as to his country, was beginning, in the words of his epitaph: "*Mantua me genuit*," &c. when, hearing but the name of his country, Sordello instantly springs up and embraces him.

76. *Ah servile Italy! abode of woe!*

"*Ahi serra Italia, di dolore ostello.*"

"From the recollection of the joyful interview of these two compatriots, the poet, turning his thoughts to the divisions by which his country was torn, is justly aroused by feelings of the utmost indignation, which give rise to the vehement apostrophe that occupies the remainder of the canto."—*Biagioli*. To show the state of Italy at this time, the following extracts are abridged from Rosetti. (*Sullo Spirito Antipapale*, p. 34, &c.) "The popes, either not having had the power or the inclination to unite Italy under their dominion, dreaded lest such union should be effected by any one else. Hence when any powerful monarch, supported

by legitimate rights, made the attempt, no artifice was unemployed by the papal court to frustrate his success. Actuated by an interested policy in thus keeping Italy divided into so many little states, these autocrats were most anxious to prevent discovery of their motives, and took the precaution to conceal them from others under the cloak of generosity. They perceived that the sentiment of liberty was the main spring of action in the world; and possessing a wide access to the hearts of the people through their numerous shaven satellites, they made it believed that they were the vicars of Jesus Christ, and the true avengers of the common liberty; and, as such, would never submit to see the noblest region of Europe subject to a universal tyranny....Thus every republic and petty municipal government considered itself a nation, and indulging in animosities against each other, fancied they were fighting for liberty, while by their constant broils they contributed in turn to perpetuate their own weakness and servitude....Hence Italy, nourishing within its own bosom the germ of disunion, fell a prey to all the foreign armies who came to oppress her....By such means the popes succeeded in dividing the people....Nor was the fraud perceived except by a few enlightened individuals, who exalting their views, and seeing the real cause of the common misery, sighed for peace under the sway of a powerful monarch, who overcoming every obstacle presented by the great Antagonist, should reconcile all minds to himself, and come, like a heavenly Saviour, to liberate them from the bondage of him who was believed to be Satan himself. As the Emperors of Germany alone boasted hereditary rights over Italy—to them they turned their longing looks. Such a desire became the more ardent, as disasters and atrocities increased:—the shock of contending parties, and the violence of hereditary hatreds rendering this one of the most calamitous epochs that history records, and then commonly called ‘The Babylonian,’ in opposition to that of the ‘New Jerusalem,’ so much desired. Such was the unhappy period in which Dante, an exile and a wanderer, through the machinations of the Pope, journeyed among the different states of Italy in search of bread and shelter... His enemy, the Pope, was too powerful for him to vent openly his

just rancour....Sometimes he broke forth into some undisguised exclamation, but soon checked it with mysterious silence." Rosetti adds the following quotation from Torti:—"The poem of Dante consists less of a theological vision of the next world than of a moral and political picture of his own time. He wished to paint the vices of his age, the crimes and misery of nations and their rulers. Severe censure on the depravity of his time—patriotic invectives against civil discord—a bold and happy reference of every thing to the history of his own age—the picture of the next world serving to paint the wickedness of this;—these are the characters which mark the *Divina Comedia* with the stamp of originality, and distinguish it from all poems, both ancient and modern. ...Nor in truth could the annals of the world minister to his pencil materials so abundant as he found in the sad changes, both at home and abroad, of the period in which he lived. His paintings are never so sublime as when he describes the accumulated horrors of that fatal period.....emboldened as he was to reveal to the world the political crimes and the vices of those men, clothed with supreme power, who exercised so mighty an influence over the convulsions into which the christian world was then thrown." Observing that the popes here alluded to are Celestine V., Boniface VIII., and Nicholas II., Rosetti proceeds to show that the language used by the more enlightened writers of the time to describe Italy under the papal dominion, was conformable to that used by Dante; quoting Petrarch, who calls Rome "the nest of all the evil in the world—fountain of sorrow—dread prison—false and wicked Babylon—Hell of the living." (Page 39.) He then shows how the writers of that period were obliged to conceal their real meaning under the veil of allegory, since Cecco d'Ascoli, a friend of Dante's, was burnt alive for professing the doctrines of the Paterini or Albigenses, the protestants of those times. The figures are then explained under which the Pope is by Dante represented in the *Inferno*, such as demons, monsters, and more particularly under that of the she wolf or harlot of the Revelations, identified with that of Lucifer or Antichrist. (*Inf.* xxxiv.) To these remarks it may be sufficient to add that the miseries of Italy so feelingly de-

picted in this and the fourteenth canto, are in the sixteenth attributed wholly to the government and example of the popes.

82. *While now thy living ones are constant foes.*

"If identity of country rendered Sordello and Virgil so affectionate, who lived in far distant times, much more," Dante infers, "should those love each other who are contemporaries, and living within the same wall."—*Lombardi*. "From this," says Boyd, "Milton seems to have taken the hint of those lines (*Paradise Lost*, b. ii.)"

"O shame to men! devil with devil damn'd  
Firm concord holds. Men only disagree,  
Or creatures rational, though under hope  
Of heavenly grace, and God proclaiming peace;  
Yet live in battle, enmity, and strife  
Among themselves, and levy cruel wars;  
Wasting the earth, each other to destroy:  
As if (which might induce us to accord)  
Man had not hellish foes enew beside,  
That day and night for his destruction wait."

88. *What boots it that Justinian's skill replaced.*

i. e. Justinian delivered Italy from the Goths, and reformed the laws. (See *Par.* vi.) But his exertions are of no avail, if she is to be no longer under the controul of his successor. Italy is described under the figure of an untamed steed.

91. *Ah ye! who should to things divine be given.*

"Ahi gente! che dovresti esser divota," &c.

The "gente," whom Dante seems to have avoided mentioning in a more marked manner, are not "the people," as generally interpreted, but the priests." The identical words, "La gente," are used in the sixteenth canto (line 100), and evidently relate

to the priests, who are said to follow the example of the Pope, in making worldly emoluments their sole pursuit. The scriptural injunction (line 93) is, "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's." For Dante's politics with regard to the Emperors, see *Introd. to Inf.* p. x.

96. *Since to the bridle ye have put your hand.*

"Poi che ponesti mano alla predella."

These words, generally applied to Albert, in the following stanza, are by Lombardi more properly referred to the "gente" (the priests) in the preceding. But, interpreting *predella* to mean *seggio* instead of *bridella*, he gives a forced interpretation to the words "ponesti mano," *i.e.* "done violence to the imperial seat." That Dante used these words in the more common acceptation may be proved by the passage just referred to (*canto xvi.* 100), where Dante, speaking on the same subject (the Popes and their assumption of temporal power), uses the very same words. "*Le legge son, ma chi pon inan ad esse?*" The present passage will thus mean: "Oh ye priests, who, &c.—look how, since the time when ye took the bridle (*i.e.* the government) in hand, Italy, like a wild beast, hath refused to submit to restraint, and broken into all manner of uncurbed licentiousness."—Albert (line 97), Emperor of Austria, succeeded his father, Rodolph, in 1298. (Of Rodolph see *canto vii.* 94.) Albert, here referred to, never entered Italy. The imprecation, directed against him in the form of a prophecy, points to his murder in 1308 by his nephew. Hence it appears that Dante did not finish his poem till a later period. The successor of Albert (line 102) was Henry VII. of Luxemburg, by whose assistance Dante hoped to have been restored to his country. But Henry lost his life before he had reduced Italy to subjection, and all the poet's fond anticipations were disappointed.—Italy, which Albert and his father neglected for the sake of their German possessions, is by Dante called the garden of the empire:—by Lord Byron, the garden of the world. (*Childe Harold*, iv. 26.)

" Fair Italy,  
Thou art the garden of the world, the home  
Of all art yields and nature can desire;  
E'en in thy desert, what is like to thee?"

106. *Come see the Capulets and Montagues.*

The factious hostility of the Guelfs and Ghibellines caused the ruin of these and other great families. "The old palace of the Cappelletti, with its uncouth balcony and irregular windows is still standing in a lane near the market place of Verona; and what Englishman can behold it with indifference?"—*Rogers*. Santifiore (line 111) was a place near Sienna—mentioned as an instance of the desolations committed by robbers, through the inertness of the government. A bitter irony is intended in this as in the following line (115)—"Come and behold thy people, how they love!"

127. *My Florence! well contented mayst thou be.*

This is ironical. Florence was more divided by factions than any other city. "Many people," continues Dante (line 130), "through fear of acting hastily, refrain from expressing the sentiments of their hearts with regard to the justice that should be exercised by parties and by individuals towards one another; but the Florentines, who are ever talking of it, entirely forget its practice. Many people likewise are backward in undertaking the duties of the state, but the Florentines are all eager for office."

142. *Compared to thee, who dost such schemes conceive.*

So fond of innovation were the Florentines, that their schemes lasted not from one month to another.—*Chaucer, Clerke's Tale.*

" O stormy people, unsted and ever untrue,  
And indiscreet, and changing as a fan,  
Delighting ever in rombel that is new;  
For like the mone waxen ye and wane."

## CANTO VII.

3. *Back drew Sordello, saying: "Who are ye?"*

Virgil answers, he died in the reign of Augustus, before the souls deemed worthy to ascend to God were directed towards this mountain of Purgatory, *i. e.* before the death and resurrection of our Saviour opened "a new and living way" to those men whom God had decreed to save. See *Inf.* iv. 53. Want of faith, he adds, was his only fault, as he before told us. *Inf.* iv. 39.

25. *Not what I did, but what I failed to do.*

*i. e.* "Not on account of any crimes I have committed, but because (as mentioned line 34) I omitted to clothe myself with the three virtues, faith, hope, and charity."—*Lombardi*. The "place below" (line 28) is Limbo. See *Inf.* iv. 25.

40. *"No certain bounds are fix'd," he then replied.*

"They had been conversing, in the outskirts of Purgatory, with the souls of negligent or excommunicated persons, who were not yet admitted to complete their purification."—*Venturi*. See Introduction. The answer Dante puts into the mouth of Sordello, is from Virgil, *Æn.* vi. 673. "Nulli certa domus:—lucis habitamus opacis."

44. *And since by night we cannot climb the ascent.*

"Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you; for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth."—*John* xii. 35. The acknowledgement of one of the spirits that they

could not walk except by day (the day meaning in the Scriptures our natural life), affords strong evidence that the whole fiction of the mountain of Purgatory is intended to refer to this life.

74. *Ceruse and Indian wood, bright emerald.*

"Ebony is not a native of India only, since it abounds in Ethiopia; but Dante follows the authority of his master, Virgil, who asserts that it is the production of India. '*Sola India nigrum fert hebenum.*' *Georg.* ii. 116."—*Monti, Proposta, in legno.*

82. '*Salve Regina*' *chaunting, might be seen.*

The beginning of a hymn to the Virgin.—The selection of an eminence (line 88), is borrowed from Virgil, lib. vi. 754.

"Et tumulum capit, unde omnes longo ordine possit  
Adversos legere, et venientum discere vultus."

"Worthy of admiration throughout the remainder of the canto is the wonderful variety displayed in the looks and attitudes of the personages introduced, whom the poet describes with a beauty and a conciseness that no other pencil could attain."—*Biagioli.*

94. *Was Emperor Rodolph; who the power possess'd.*

Rodolph was the father of Albert (canto vi. line 103).—The *Molta*, a river of Bohemia, which runs into the Elbe.

103. *He short of nose, in counsel side by side.*

Philip III. of France, father of Philip the Fair.—In an expedition against the King of Arragon, he lost his fleet and his army;—thus disgracing the lilies—and died of grief at Perpignan, in 1285. Hence his attitude of distress—his face resting on his hand.



His companion is Henry, King of Navarre—father-in-law to Philip the Fair. They are introduced as mutually lamenting the wickedness of their son and son-in-law, "the scourge of France."

112. *He large of limb, in song accompanied.*

Peter III. of Arragon:—his companion, Charles I. King of Apulia. The "youth behind Peter" is either his eldest son, Alphonso, or his youngest, Peter. His two other sons (line 119) who succeeded to his dominions—(James to Arragon, and Frederick to Sicily) inherited not, says Dante, the virtues of their father.

121. *But rarely human excellence doth mount.*

Imitated by Chaucer. (*Wife of Bath.*)

"Full selde upriseth by his branches small  
Prowesse of man; for God of his goodnesse  
Woll that we claim of Him our gentillesse."

Charles and Peter (line 124) are the same before mentioned (lines 112, 113). They are said to be respectively superior to their children; and hence the distress now caused by Charles's successors through bad government in Provence and Apulia.

128. *That such a husband as Costanza's lord.*

Costanza, wife of Peter III. of Arragon, before mentioned.—Beatrice and Margeret, daughters of Raymond Berenger, Count of Provence—the one married to St. Louis of France—the other to his brother Charles of Anjou.

130. *There England's Henry may be seen.*

Henry III. of England, called by Villani, un semplice uom di buon fede. "He is seated alone," says Landino, "to show that

kings of such virtue are rare ; "—“ because he loved solitude,” says Vellutello. He was more happy in his offspring than Peter III. —alluding to Edward I. of famous memory. He who “ sits lower,” (133) as not being of royal blood, and “ looks above,” to denote his virtue, is William, Marquis of Montferrat—put to death by his nobles at Alexandria in Lombardy, for endeavouring to check their tyranny over the people. To revenge his death, a war ensued between his sons (heirs of Montferrat and the Canavese) and the Alexandrians.

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## CANTO VIII.

1. *It was the hour that wakes regret anew.*

“ Era già l' ora che volge 'l disio  
 A' naviganti, e 'ntenerisce il enore  
 Lo di ch' han detto a' dolci amici a Dio ;  
 E che lo nuovo peregrin d'amore  
 Punge, se ode squilla di lontano,  
 Che paia 'l giorno pianger che si muore.”

“ The poet describes the hour of evening ; but the circumstances which accompany the principal idea, render this description so divine, that how often soever one reads it, the same feelings that touched the heart of the poet are constantly renewed.”—*Biagioli*.  
 “ By digressions similar to this, introduced without apparent art or effort, Dante interests us for all mankind, whilst Petrarch, being interested only about himself, alludes to men at sea at eventide, only to excite greater compassion for his own sufferings.”—*Ugo Foscolo, Parallel between Dante and Petrarch*. Lord Byron has thus translated this celebrated passage. (*Don Juan*, c. iii. st. 108.)

“ Soft hour! which wakes the wish and melts the heart  
 Of those who sail the seas, on the first day  
 When they from their sweet friends are torn apart;  
 Or fills with love the pilgrim on his way,  
 As the far bell of vesper makes him start,  
 Seeming to weep the dying day's return.”

The following is by Mr. Merivale. (See *Ugo Foscolo's Parallel between Dante and Petrarch*.)

“ 'Twas now the hour when fond desire renews  
 To him who wanders o'er the pathless main,  
 Raising unbidden tears, the last adieus  
 Of tender friends, whom fancy shapes again ;

When the late parted pilgrim thrills with thought  
 Of his loved home, if o'er the distant plain  
 Perchance his ears the village chimes have caught,  
 Seeming to mourn the close of dying day."

The imitation of the fifth line by Grey, in his *Elegy*, is well known.

"The curfew tolls the knell of parting day."

11. *Fixing her eyes intently tow'rds the east.*

"According to the custom of the ancient Christians—who praying by night, recognized in the rising sun a representation of Jesus Christ."—*Venturi*. "Not even the pencil of Raphael himself could have given a more perfect picture of a supplicating soul, wholly absorbed in heavenly contemplation, than Dante has done in these three lines."—*Lombardi*. "Te lucis ante terminum," (line 13) are the first words of a hymn of the church, imploring protection during the night against evil spirits. It refers here to the serpent, who (line 98) every night infested the valley.—The wheels on high (line 17), mean the heavenly spheres.

19. *Reader! here sharpen to the truth thy sight.*

*Lombardi* (with high praise from Mr. Cary) interprets the passage thus—that the song "Te lucis ante," having a reference to corporeal beings, the spirits offered up this petition, not on their own account, but on ours. (See canto xi. 22.) *Lombardi* adds: "As therefore, if we look through a very fine veil, the sight easily passes on without perceiving it, to objects that lie on the other side; so here the poet fears that our mind's eye may insensibly pass on to contemplate these spirits, as if they were praying for the relief of their own wants; without discovering the veil of our wants, with which they invest themselves in the act of offering up their prayer."

26. *Descending down, each with a flaming brand.*

"The two swords with broken points and blunted edges represent justice, mingled with mercy."—*Landino*. "The green garments and wings of the Angels are intended to inspire these spirits with hope."—*Lombardi*.

36. *As by excess of brilliancy subdued.*

"As with an object that excels the sense  
Dazzled and spent." *Par. Lost.* viii. 45.

"Mary's bosom," (line 39)—"That part of heaven where Mary dwells."—*Costa*.

53. *O Nino, noble Judge! with what delight.*

Nino di Gallura, a powerful chief of Pisa, and Lord or Judge, as he was called, of Gallura in Sardinia. (See note, line 73.)

65. *Who sat there, crying: "Conrad, up and view.*

The moment that Dante had said he was alive (line 59), Sordello and Nino draw back in astonishment, and turn—the first to Virgil, the second to Conrad Malespina (of whom see notes, lines 109, 135), and exclaim: "Rise from thy seat, and behold this signal instance of God's mercy, in his allowing one yet in the body to visit these regions."

70. *When thou hast cross'd again the swelling main.*

"The swelling main"—the sea interposed between the earth and Purgatory. "When you have returned to earth," he says, "bid my daughter Giovanna to offer up prayers for me."

73. *The love that erst to me her mother bare.*

After Nino's death, his widow Beatrice (sister of Azzo VIII. of Este, one of the most powerful tyrants of Italy, and chief of the Guelf party) married Galeazzo Visconti, son of Maffeo, the ambitious ruler of Milan. This marriage, uniting two such powerful families, was considered by Dante the death blow of the Ghibelline party, and he bitterly inveighed against it. Although Nino was a Guelf, Dante speaks of him with affection. See note to *Inf.* xxxiii. 1, where he is mentioned as acting a treacherous part against his uncle, Count Ugolino. Dante intimates (line 53) his unexpected delight at finding him in Purgatory instead of in Hell, "the abode of guilt."—"The passage of Dante which alludes to the marriage of Galeazzo with Beatrice, is full of beauty. The affection with which Dante speaks to Nino, whom he is glad to meet in Purgatory, when he was afraid lest he might have been lost—the bitterness of his reproach to Beatrice, whom he detested as belonging to the house of Este, the object of Dante's unrelenting and deep abhorrence—his silence against Visconti, whose conduct he could not approve, and yet, not to lower the character of a Ghibelline chief, he would not openly condemn—all these are points which should never escape the reader's attention in perusing those noble lines where Dante, walking with Sordello through Purgatory, is represented as inviting him to descend into the valley and hold converse with the mighty shadows below."—*Panizzi, Landscape Annual*, 1832. "To us, this episode is among the most affecting in the whole poem."—*Ugo Foscolo, Discorso*, p. 56.

80. *The viper, which the field of Milan shows.*

*i.e.* The arms of Galeazzo, her new husband—the ensign also of the Milanese. The cock was the ensign of Gallura, where Nino ruled. "She will not," says Nino, "die with such fair fame as if she had preserved her faith and love to me." And it appears she had reason to repent.

86. *Where move the stars with slower impulse roll'd.*

Towards the antarctic pole, where the apparent motion of the stars is slow.

91. *Then he to me: "The four bright stars survey'd.*

The four bright stars of the first canto—signifying the four cardinal virtues. These rose in the morning. The three which now succeed towards evening are the three evangelical virtues, Faith, Hope, and Charity. The former may represent the Mosaic dispensation, the latter the evangelical.

100. *Among the herbs and flowers his wily track  
The snake pursued, oft turning as he came  
His head, and smoothing, like a beast, his back.*

"Milton," says Biagioli, "has hence borrowed his beautiful description of the serpent." (*Par. Lost*, ix. 434, 525.)

"Nearer he drew and many a walk traversed  
Of stateliest covert, cedar, pine, or palm;  
Then voluble and bold; now hid, now seen  
Among thick woven arborets and flowers  
Imborder'd on each bank.                   \*                   \*  
                 \*                   \*                   \*                   \*                   \*  
His turret crest and sleek enameled neck,  
Fawning, and lick'd the ground whereon she trod."

"By the serpent is intended our Adversary, who comes among herbs and flowers, *i.e.* among worldly delights and pleasures, to deceive man."—*Landino*.

104. *When moved those hawks celestial.*

"Dante calls the two Angels 'astor,' (a kind of hawk) because they had wings, and came to chase away the hostile serpent."—

*Lombardi*. "Perhaps there is no description so sublime in the *Purgatorio* as that of the discovery and expulsion of the serpent."  
—*Ugo Foscolo, Edinburgh Review*, vol. 29, art. *Dante*.

109. *That shade which to the Judge, when call'd,  
drew nigh.*

Conrad Malespina—who approached Nino, the Judge of Gallura, when he cried (line 65): "Up Conrad." He was Marquis of Lunigiana, and father of Morello Malespina, who received Dante during his exile. (See note line 135.)—"Sufficient wax," &c., line 112, is thus explained. "May the divine grace find so hearty a co-operation on the part of thy own will as shall enable thee to ascend the terrestrial Paradise, which is on the top of this mountain."—*Cary*. Conrad endeavours to elicit some tidings relative to Valdimagra and Lunegiana, of which he had been Marquis. The love he bore to his own family, refers to the liberality he displayed in granting them large possessions.

131. *That through the world pursues a vicious lord.*

Pope Boniface VIII.—"Should any one doubt of this explanation, let him read canto xvi. 100, 105."—*Biagioli*, supported by *Costa*.

135. *Sev'n times shall not the sun repose his head.*

*i.e.* The sun shall not enter the sign of the Ram seven times ere thou shalt be confirmed in thy good opinion of Valdimagra.—"The truth of the prophecy pronounced in 1300 among the dead, began to be experienced by Dante seven years after among the mountains of Luni, and in the house of Malespina."—*Ugo Foscolo, Discorso*, p. 170.



## CANTO IX.

"The opening of this canto is famous both for the originality and magnificence of the description, and for the numerous erudite disputes as to its meaning—the commentators being divided in opinion whether a lunar or a solar aurora is here intended to be described by the poet." (*Paduan Editor.*) There were two Auroras, say the old commentators, one daughter of the sun, the other of the moon—the former the wife, the latter the concubine of Tithon. As "concuina," not "moglic,"—"amico," not "marito," are the terms used by Dante, and a description of night immediately follows, it must be confessed that a lunar aurora seems to be here spoken of. At this conclusion, opposed to all classical recollections, I have most reluctantly arrived, after maturely weighing the evidence on both sides the question. The advocates of the solar aurora contend that Dante described morning as taking place on earth, and night in the opposite hemisphere of Purgatory, (*nel luogo ove eravamo*). But this mixing up of light and darkness, and of two hemispheres, with the conjunctive "and," is inadmissible. To obviate this objection, some would reconcile the apparent description of night with the supposed previous one of morning in Purgatory, by forcing the seventh line to mean, as Mr. Cary "conjectures," that "night being divided into four watches, the third was past and the fourth and last was begun, so that there might be some faint glimmering of morning twilight,"—thus forcing the imperfect "chinava" into a preterit, in order to obtain "some faint glimmering of twilight,"—and violating the obvious meaning of the whole line "e'l terzo già chinava 'nginso l'ale," ("and the third was already bending its wing downward,") which describes night in the act of coming down and brooding upon the earth. But to enter into the question fully, would occupy more space than can be here assigned, and, after all, prove very unprofit-

able. Suffice it to say, that the present interpretation, adopted by the Paduan editor, obviates all difficulties and inconsistencies.—Dante describes the rise of the moon at the time that two portions of the night (whether divided into three or four parts) were passed, when he fell asleep. For so doing, while his companions were still sitting and conversing, he makes an apology, as being the only one of the party who was cumbered with a weight of flesh ("di quel d'Adamo"). Early in the morning (line 13) he was visited with the dream that follows.

5. *Placed in the figure of the Scorpion chill.*

The epithet "chill," applied to the Scorpion has caused much discussion—"ardens" being the epithet of Virgil. (*Georg.* i. 34.) He however refers to the sign being governed by the hot planet Mars—Dante to the dormant state of the animal during winter, or to the sign as entered by the sun at the end of October. Virgil himself twice calls the snake "frigidus."—*Eclog.* iii. 93 ; viii. 71.

12 *Where on the grass we five together sate.*

Virgil, Dante, Sordello, Nino, and Conrad Malespina.

15. *Thus haply mindful of her former pain.*

*i.e.* The pain Progne suffered on being changed into a swallow, after the injury done her by Tereus. See *Ovid, Met.* vi.

23. *Whence Ganymede his friends abandoning.*

Ganymede was changed into an eagle by Jupiter, on Mount Ida, and carried up to heaven.—*Horace, Carm.* iv. 4.

" Qualem ministrum fulminis alitem  
Cui rex Deorum regnum in aves vagas  
Permisit; expectus fidelem  
Jupiter, in Ganymede flavo.

"By the eagle," says Landino, "is to be understood, illuminating grace, which, carrying Dante up to seraphic love (the sphere of fire), he there becomes inflamed with it." Thus Lucia (see note l. 55) and the eagle are the same—the one being the figure of the other; for, Landino continues, "as grace is full of light, so is the eagle the only bird that can bear the light of the sun—being also the most lofty in its flight."

43. *My Comforter alone was at my side.*

"Several circumstances, together with the recollection of the dream, aggravated Dante's terror:—the departure of the other spirits—the advance the sun had made—the view of the sea only—and his ignorance of the place he was in."—*Biagioli*.

55. *A lady came, and 'I am Lucia,' said.*

St. Lucia, or Heavenly grace. See note line 30, also *Introd.* to the *Inferno*, p. 14; and note, *Inf.* ii. 97.

63. *Together with thy sleep she took her flight.*

Imitated from Virgil and Ovid—"Nox Æneam somnusque relinquit." "Discedunt pariter somnusque Deusque."

70. *Reader, thou seest how I exalt my theme.*

Together with his subject the poet exalts his style, on hearing that his mysterious dream was ratified by the actual fulfilment of the circumstances it typified, and that Lucia, "to deeds of mercy ever given," (*Inf.* ii. 100) had taken compassion upon him, and exalted him to that gate which may be said to form the entrance not only of Purgatory, but of Paradise.

77. *Three steps of different hues ; a Porter too.*

The idea of the "Porter" seems taken from St. John x. 3. "To him the porter openeth, and the sheep hear his voice, &c." This porter is the same with "the Angel," line 103; and from the manner in which he accosts Dante, and his bearing a shining sword, the poet probably had in view Genesis iii. 24, "And he placed at the east of the garden of Eden, cherubims, and a flaming sword, which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." This same Angel is alluded to canto i. 99, "Il primo ministro eh' è di quei di Paradiso."

86. *He then began : "and tell me where your guide ?*

*i. e.* "Where is the Angel who is accustomed to guide those who come to this place?"—*Costa*. The Angel did not recognise Virgil as a proper guide, and was proceeding to treat Dante as an intruder.

97. *More dark than purple was the second's hue.*

Hence, Mr. Cary observes, Milton took his description of the gate of Heaven. *Par. Lost*, iii. 516.

"Each stair mysteriously was meant."

113. *Sev'n P.'s upon my brow.*

The seven "P.'s" denote the seven sins (Peccata), from which Dante was to be cleansed one by one, as he passed through the seven rounds of Purgatory.

116. *Of the same colour with his garb would be.*

"His garment, the colour of dust, is the symbol of penitence, in which the Angel is clad, as the minister of reconciliation to

sinner."—*Poggiali*. The Angel is represented with two keys, in reference to Matt. xvi. 19, "And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Hence the claim Pope Boniface pretends to, (*Inf.* xxvii. 103).

"Heaven, as thou know'st, I have the power at will  
To lock or unlock; hence the keys are twain."

132. *Return must he who casts a look behind.*

"And Jesus said unto him: No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."—*St. Luke* ix. 62. "But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt."—*Genesis* xix. 26.

136. *Rung nor Tarpeia, nor so loudly roar'd.*

Lucan relates the forcible entry of Julius Cæsar into the Roman treasury on the Tarpeian rock, when Metellus, who endeavoured to defend it, being overpowered, the ancient doors opened with a dreadful crash, and "the hoarded wealth of ages past was displayed."

"Protinus abducto patuerunt templa Metello :  
Tunc rupes Tarpeia sonat, magnoque reclusas  
Testatur stridore fores, &c." *Lucan, Phars.* L. iii. 153.

Milton's description is appositely quoted by Cary.

"On a sudden open fly,  
With impetuous recoil, and jarring sound,  
Th' infernal doors, and on their hinges grate  
Harsh thnnder, that the lowest bottom shook  
Of Erebus." *Par. Lost*, ii. 381.

## CANTO X.

5. *And had mine eyes look'd back, oh ! what excuse.*

An allusion to Lot's wife, Genesis xix. 26; and to St. Luke, ix. 62, " But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt ;"—also to the last canto, line 132, " Return must he who casts a backward look."

16. *Ere we emerged from out that narrow track.*

The narrow track is in the original "*cruna*," "the eye of a needle,"—in allusion to the rich and proud men about to be described; according to the scriptural expression, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."—*Mark* x. 25.

19. *I, wearied out, both doubtful of our way.*

Dante alone was weary—being encumbered with his human frame.—The "*plain*" means the first ledge or cornice that winds round the mountain, and is so called from its width, in comparison with the very narrow track from which the poets had emerged. It is said to be "*solitary*," in the same sense that the gate is said to be little used (line 2), in allusion to the small number of the virtuous. Hence the strait path in the *Inferno* was called "*deserta*."

40. *One might have sworn that he was uttering "Hail."*

"And the Angel came in unto her and said : Hail ! thou that art highly favoured ; the Lord is with thee : blessed art thou among women."—*St. Luke* i. 28. The humility of the Virgin is the example proposed. Milton has here followed Dante,

“On whom the Angel “Hail”  
Bestowed, the holy salutation used  
Long after to blest Mary, second Eve.”

(*Par. Lost*, v. 387.) The text that follows (line 44), is from St. Luke i. 38. “And Mary said: Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word.” “The Virgin Mary,” says Dante, “who thus answered the Angel Gabriel, turned the key, and with high love prevailed;”—i.e. becoming worthy by her virtue and humility, to be the mother of our Lord, she was the means of reconciling us to God, and restoring us to his love.

*56. Bearing the holy ark, the steers and wain.*

“And they set the ark of God upon a new cart;...and when they came to Nachon’s threshing floor, Uzzah put forth his hand to the ark of God, and took hold of it; for the oxen shook it. And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzzah; and God smote him there for his error, and there he died by the ark of God.”—*2 Samuel* vi. 3, 6, 7.

*65. The Psalmist dancing, as the Scriptures tell.*

“And David danced before the Lord with all his might...And as the ark of the Lord came into the city of David, Michal, Saul’s daughter, looked through a window, and saw King David leaping and dancing before the Lord; and she despised him in her heart... And David said unto Michal: It was before the Lord...And I will yet be more vile than thus, and will be base in my own sight.”—*2 Samuel* vi. 14, &c.

*77. And there his horse’s rein a widow held.*

The story is, that while the Emperor Trajan was riding at the head of the Roman army, he was so overcome by the prayers of a widow, whose son had been murdered, that he left the army and

returned to Rome to avenge her. St. Gregory is said to have been so affected on reading this story, as to have offered up prayers for Trajan's deliverance from Limbo, and to have procured his translation into Paradise. This is the victory he is said to have achieved. By Dion Cassius the story is related of the Emperor Adrian. Dante, however, again alludes to it, speaking of Trajan.—*Par.* xx. 45.

85. *And he appeared to answer her, "Then wait.*

"The precision, the simplicity, and the elegance of this dialogue is wonderful; where, among other expressions, the most remarkable is the "*in cui dolor s'affretta*,"—signifying the grief of one impatient of any the slightest delay in the comfort she expects."—*Biagioli*.

95. *Wrought in the rock this speaking visible.*

"*Produsse esto visibil parlare.*"

"This visibil," says Biagioli, "probably suggested to Milton (a most studious and successful imitator of our poet) his famous 'darkness visible.'"—Of speaking figures, Shakspeare says: (*Cymbeline*, act ii. sc. 4.)

"Never saw I figures

So likely to report themselves."

See Introduction, and compare Homer's Shield; Virgil *Æn.* viii. 455 and 626; also Pope's Temple of Fame.

102. *These to the lofty steps our way will lead.*

*i.e.* The higher circles of Purgatory. Lest the reader should despair at the sight of these horrible torments, the poet comforts him (line 106), by reflecting upon the happiness to follow. "And therefore be thou not curious how the ungodly shall be punished and when; but enquire how the righteous shall be saved, whose the world is, and for whom the world is created."—2 *Esdras* ix. 13.



116. *To earth so closely weigh these spirits down.*

The idea of the proud being bent to the ground is probably taken from the punishment of Nebuchadnezzar, who "bad his portion with the beasts of the field," and after he was restored to the dignity of man, confesses his sin, and praises God, saying, "Those that walk in pride be is able to abase."—*Daniel* iv. 37.

121. *O haughty Christians! wretched, weary race!*

"This burst of the poet is worthy of admiration for its beauty, force, and truth."—*Biagioli*. "Ye are confident," says Dante, "that ye are advancing forward all the time ye are going backward." (See *Inf.* i. 30 and note.) Pride is the vice first punished, as being the root of all others, and that to which even the love of money is often subservient. It is pride that renders man so disobedient, and prevents him acknowledging with humility his constant dependence on his heavenly Father. Hence the numerous denunciations against it in Scripture. "Why is earth and ashes proud?...The beginning of pride is as when one departeth from God, and his heart is turned away from his Maker. For pride is the beginning of sin."—*Solomon, Ecclesiasticus* x. 9, 12.

125. *Born to become the angelic butterfly.*

"The soul itself was deemed of old to be aptly designated under the emblematical form of a butterfly, which, having emerged from the chrysalis state, flutters in the air, instead of continuing to crawl on the earth, as it did before the worm it once was ceased to exist."—*Lord Brougham, Natural Theology*, vol. 1, p. 132.

## CANTO XI.

1. *O thou our Father, who dost dwell in heaven.*

"O padre nostro, che ne' cieli stai."

This paraphrase of the Lord's prayer, most beautiful in the Italian, is surpassed only by the prayer itself.—God is supposed, out of superior love to the Angels (his first works), to make the heavens his more peculiar residence. As, however, he is omnipresent, so is he not circumscribed.—"Behold, the heaven, and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee."—1 *Kings* viii. 27. "God himself is styled, Pater in Cœlis, not because not elsewhere, but because his glory is there revealed."—*The Apostasis of the latter times.* By Joseph Mede.

7. *O may thy kingdom's peace to us arrive ;  
For if it come not, &c.*

"No man can come unto me, except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him ; and I will raise him up at the last day."—*John* vi. 44.

"Of good and pious works thou art the seed,  
Which quickens only where thou say'st it may.  
Unless thou show to us thine own true way,  
No man can find it : Father, thou must lead."

*Wordsworth, Hymn to the Supreme Being.*

10. *As Angels sacrifice their will to Thine,  
Chaunting Hosannas in thy courts ;—e'en so  
May man to thee his every will resign.*

"Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven : " *i. e.* with the

same zeal and fervour with which the Angels pour forth their songs before the throne of God, or go forth, in obedience to his will, to execute his commands throughout the universe. The sacrifice most pleasing to God is that of our passions and inclinations. These we are called upon to sacrifice, whenever they are at variance with the dictates of conscience. From the perfect subordination of our thoughts and actions to the will of our heavenly Father, results that harmony of the faculties which constitutes our true happiness here and hereafter.

13. *Our daily manna give us day by day ;  
If that be wanting, in this desert rude,  
He backward goes who most would speed his way.*

"This is that bread which came down from heaven—not as your fathers did eat manna and are dead ; he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever."—*John* vi. 58. Without this daily support, in vain we endeavour to advance. "There is one that laboreth and taketh pains, and maketh haste, and he is so much the more behind."—*Ecclesiasticus* xi. 11.

24. *For those we left on earth we intercede.*

"Aristotle has said, that to affirm the dead take no thought for the good of the living is a disparagement to the laws of that friendship which in their state of separation they cannot be tempted to rescind. And the Church hath taught in general that they pray for us ; they recommend to God the state of all their relatives, in the union of the intercession that our blessed God makes for us and them."—*Jeremy Taylor, Sermon* xxviii. 2nd pt.

59. *Aldobrandeschi, of the Latin race.*

Omberto, the son of Guglielmo Aldobrandeschi, Count of

Santafiore, in the territory of Sienna,—who so provoked the Siennese by his arrogance that they murdered him at Campagnatico.

94. *In painting, Cimabue thought the field  
Was all his own ;—now Giotto has the cry.*

Cimabue, a Florentine, was one of the first that contributed to the restoration of painting in Italy. He is said to have been an excellent painter, but proud and disdainful. He died in 1300.—To the epitaph written by himself, Dante here alludes.

“ Credidit ut Cimabos picturæ castra tenere,  
Certe sic tenuit; nunc tenet astra poli.”

“ In the dawn of art, about 1285, Cimabue, in going through the Campagna from Florence to Vespignano, saw a shepherd boy, who, instead of attending to his flock, was busily engaged in tracing figures with a piece of chalk-stone upon a rock. He stopped; and surprised at the skill which the child evinced, asked if he would go home with him, and become his pupil. The boy readily assented; and to this circumstance did Italy owe her celebrated Giotto, the father of modern painting; and Dante, a friend and solace in exile.”—*Landscape Annual*, 1832, page 97.

This story is alluded to by Rogers in his “ Italy.”

— “ when Cimabue found a shepherd boy,  
Tracing his idle fancies on the ground.”

97. *In letters so, one Guido hath suppress'd.*

As in painting, says Dante, so in poetry—those who were once famous are now surpassed.—Guido Cavalcanti, a great poet and friend of Dante (see *Inf.* x. 62, and note) had eclipsed the fame of Guido Guinicelli, a Bolognese, much celebrated in his time.—Dante is generally supposed (line 99) to predict his own future fame “ as destined to chase the twain from out their nest.”

108. *Thine will it be, more glory to enjoy ?*

*i.e.* "A thousand years are nothing compared with eternity; yet before this short space of time is elapsed, your boasted reputation will have perished. Others will have arisen and eclipsed you. What difference will it then make, whether old age shall have gradually consumed your flesh, or whether you shall have died in infancy?" Dante has here imitated Boethius. "Quod si eternitatis infinita spatia pertractes, quid habes quod de tui nominis diuturnitate læteris? Unius enim mora momenti, si decem millibus conferatur annis, quoniam utrumque spatium definitum est, minimam licet, habet tamen aliquam proportionem. At hic ipse numerus annorum, quantumlibet multiplex, ad interminabilem diuturnitatem ne comparari quidem potest."

109. *He labouring onward there, possess'd a fame.*

Provenzan Salvani (see line 121)—a distinguished Siennese General, who commanded his countrymen in the battle of Mont' Aperti, "what-time was forced to bow Florence' fierce rage, her loftiness confounded" (line 113), and "when Arbia's stream ran purple to the sea," as mentioned *Inf.* x. 86. See also *ib.* 91, and notes, where is given an account of this battle which so humbled Florence.

115. *Your fame is like the grass, whose varying hue  
Doth come and go.*

"La vostra nominanza è color d'erba,  
Che viene e va."

The passage, beginning line 91, "Oh the vain boast of human faculties!" ("O vana gloria dell' umane posse.") and ending with this stanza, so beautiful in the original, is worthy of all praise.

133. "*His glory at the highest*"—he replied.

"Provenzano Salvani humbled himself so far for the sake of one of his friends who was detained in captivity by Charles I. of Sicily, as personally to supplicate the people of Sienna to contribute the sum required by the king for his ransom; and this act of self-abasement atoned for his general ambition and pride. He fell in the battle of Vald'Elsa, wherein the Florentines discomfited the Siennese, in June, 1269."—*Cary*. The expressions "He subdued his soul to that which shook his every vein," (line 138) are very strong for the occasion, and have led to the following remark of Ugo Foscolo. "This is a passage in which, with designed obscurity and a strength of expression and feeling which make the reader tremble, Dante discovers an exact portrait of himself, in a man who, stripping his visage of all shame, and trembling in his very vitals, places himself in the public way and stretches out his hand for charity."—*Edinburgh Review*, No. 60. That Dante applied these lines not only to Salvani, but more immediately to himself is evident from the lines which follow, "I say no more, &c."—"This deed," (line 142) *i.e.* This act of humility and friendship exonerated Salvani from the usual penance in the lower regions of the mountain, which those who have delayed repentance undergo previously to their entrance into Purgatory. See Introduction.

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## CANTO XII.

In this canto Dante shows that no vice is more displeasing to God than pride. Hence he tacitly admonishes us ever to have before our eyes warnings of its punishment. These are not placed on the side of the rock, as were the examples of humility in the last canto, but on the pavement, to show the complete debasement required to rid ourselves of this vice. Hence the resemblance to oxen drawing;—Oderisi weighed down beneath the stone on his neck—Dante, stooping to listen to his conversation.

25. *Him, erst created, noblest above all.*

Lucifer or Satan—once an Angel of light;—"the creature, once so beauteous;"—"beauteous once as hideous now;" *Inf.* xxxiv. 18, 34;—"clothed with transcendent brightness;" *Par. Lost*, i. 86;—who fell "as lightning from heaven;" *St. Luke* x. 18.

29. *Briareus' form with shaft celestial riven.*

"Briareus' huge immeasurable frame."—*Inf.* xxxi. 99. Apollo ("Thymbra's God," line 31) and the other Deities, who assisted Jupiter in the war with the Giants, are represented gazing in wonder on the effects of their Father's vengeance.

36. *Who mock'd in Sennaar's plain the Almighty power.*

"The builders next of Babel on the plain  
Of Sennaar." *Par. Lost*, iii. 466.

Quoted by Mr. Cary.—Niobe (line 37) was the wife of Amphion, king of Thebes. Inflated with pride at the number of her family (seven sons and seven daughters), she ordered the Thebans to sa-

crifice to her instead of to Latona. On which the sons of Latona were so incensed that they slew all Niobe's children.

42. *That mount by dew or rain ne'er freshen'd more.*

Alluding to the curse uttered by King David after the defeat of the Israelites in Mount Gilboa, when Saul, fearing to be taken alive, caused himself to be slain. "Ye mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew, neither let there be rain upon you." *2 Samuel* i. 21.—Arachne (line 43) defied Minerva's skill in weaving; on which the enraged Goddess turned her into a spider.

46. *O Rehoboam ! not with threatening brow.*

The son of Solomon—whose tyranny induced Israel to rebel against him. Raising the cry, "To your tents, O Israel!" they stoned Adoram, the collector of the tribute. "Therefore king Rehoboam made speed to get him up to his chariot, to flee to Jerusalem."—*1 Kings* xii. 18.

49. *Alcmæon on the rocky pavement wrought.*

Alcmæon slew his mother Eriphyle, for suffering herself to be bribed by the present of a rich jewel, to discover the retreat of her husband, Amphiaraus, who was concealed, to avoid going to the Theban war. See Virgil, *Æn.* vi. 445.—Sennacherib (line 53), the proud king of Assyria.—"And it came to pass, as he was worshipping in the house of Nisroch his god, that Adrammelech and Sharezer his sons smote him with the sword; and they escaped into the land of Armenia. And Esarhaddon his son reigned in his stead."—*2 Kings* xix. 37.

56. *Which Tomyris made, when she to Cyrus said.*

"Tomyris," queen of the Scythians, "flying with pretended fear, on being wounded, drew Cyrus into an ambuscade, and slew him,



together with two hundred thousand Persians. Not one survived to carry back the news of the slaughter. After the head of Cyrus was cut off, the Queen ordered it to be cast into a bladder full of blood, with this reproach for his cruelty : ' Sate thyself with that blood for which thou hast thirsted, and of which thou hast ever been insatiable.'—*Justin* i. 8. Of *Holophernes*, see *Judith* xv. 5.

62. *O Ilion, how debased didst thou appear.*

Troy is the province—Ilion the city, properly speaking ; though Troy is by Virgil and other poets used for the city. In describing Troy thus humbled, Dante alludes to Virgil, *Æn.* iii. 2.

" Ceciditque superbum  
Iliou, et omnis humo fumat Neptunia Troja."

75. *That one might deem, whose thoughts were not his own.*

Dante had been so intent upon the sculpture under his feet, that he took no note of time ; on which Virgil admonishes him : " Raise thy head, for it is mid-day, and behold the Angel approaching."—Of the handmaids of the day, *i. e.* the hours, see canto xxii. 118.

91. *His arms first opening, he his wings outspread.*

The Angel opens his arms, to show that mercy is offered to all. Thus canto iii. 121.

" But such wide arms hath Mercy infinite,  
She welcomes every soul that turns to her."

" The pardon of the gospel is not so much a particular act, as a manifestation of God opening the inviting arms of his love to perishing sinners, and urging them to come to him that they may have life. There is no exclusion."—*Erskine, Unconditional Freeness of the Gospel*, p. 43.—The call to ascend the steps (line 92) is from the Scriptures : " Come unto me all ye

that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."—*St. Matthew*, xi. 28, &c. Few obey the call, for "many are called, but few are chosen."

98. *Here with his pinion he my forehead struck.*

In order to remove one of the seven P's.—Having mastered pride, his besetting sin, Dante is promised a safe conduct, inasmuch as the remaining vices are comparatively easy to overcome.

101. *Where the church standeth that doth overlook.*

The church of San Miniato overlooks Florence, ironically termed "the well ruled city."—Rubaconte is the name of the bridge over the Arno, so called from the magistrate who built it.—The instances of fraud alluded to (line 104), are said to have been—the forgery of a page in the public accounts, and alteration of the coin.

110. "*Blest are the poor in spirit*"—*in such tone.*

Matt. v. 3.—Sung on the spirits quitting the circle of pride.

135. *He of the keys had graven on my brow.*

The Angel who holds the two keys (canto ix. 117), and who inscribed the seven P's on Dante's forehead.—The curious simile preceding, is to show that we cannot fully know ourselves or discover our other vices till we have mastered pride, which blinds us to all our defects.

## CANTO XIII.

16. "*O friendly planet by whose aid,*" he said.

The sun is here addressed as the symbol of God. See line 86, and *Inf.* i. 17. Thus Thomson: (*Summer*)

" And thou, O Sun,  
Soul of surrounding worlds, in whom best seen  
Shines out thy Maker, may I sing of Thee."

Spencer too has the same idea. (*Fairy Queen*, b. i. c. vii. st. 23.)

" O lightsome Day, the lampe of highest Jove,  
First made by him men's wandering wayes to guide,  
When Darkness he in deepest dongeon drove."

Speaking of God, and his virtuous creatures, employed as voluntary agents and instruments in the same exalted designs, Dwight says: " He is the sun; they the worlds and systems, which with perfect harmony move around him, attracting and being attracted, enlightened and reflecting light, enjoying and being enjoyed. With a perpetual emanation, his glory informs, pervades, and animates the whole; while the respective stars, differing indeed from each other, are all really glorious, and shine with immortal beauty and lustre."—*Serm.* vol. iii. 58.

27. *The hallow'd banquet of celestial love.*

*i.e.* Of charity—the virtue directly opposed to the vice of envy, punished in this circle.—The words (line 29) " They have no wine," were used by the Virgin Mary as an inducement to our Saviour to turn the water into wine at the marriage feast of Cana, in Galilee; and are adduced as an instance of charity. (See canto

xxii. 142.) Another instance is that of Orestes (line 32), who is praised for offering himself to die instead of his friend Pylades.

39. *Therefore its cords by love's mild hand are dealt.*

i. e. The correction of envy is partly effected in a lenient manner, by examples of the opposite virtue. Hence charity is said to direct the cords of the scourge by which envy is punished.—“The pass of pardon (line 42) is the stair leading to the third circle, where stands the Angel who pardons the crime of envy.”—*Daniello*.

70. *The lids of all an iron thread doth pierce.*

The eye is punished as being the instrument of envy, which is well said to blind the intellect. “The custom of making hawks useful for the chase by depriving them of their sight for a time, is alluded to by Chiabrera, in the defiance of Goliath.

‘ Qual giovane sparvier, se rende il giorno  
Buon cacciatore alle fasciate ciglia,  
Volge superbo gli occhi, &c.—’ ” *Portirelli*.

88. *So from your conscience may the grace of Heaven.*

“This is a fine moral, and finely expressed. Unless the conscience be cleared from its impurity, which can only be by an influence from above, the mind itself cannot act freely and clearly. ‘If ye will do his will, ye shall know of the doctrine.’ ”—*Cary*.

94. *We all, my brother, of one city true.*

i. e. “You speak to us as if to men still performing their pilgrimage on earth, and acknowledging distinctions of country. We reckon not of any other city but the one true city, destined for us in heaven. You surely therefore mean, &c.”—alluding to St. Paul. “Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow

citizens with the saints, and of the household of God."—*Ephes.* ii. 19. "For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come."—*Hebrews* xiii. 14. "These all died in the faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth."—*Hebrews* xi. 13. Hence Chaucer: (*Knight's Tale*, 2849.)

"The world is but a thurghfare full of wo,  
And we ben pilgrims passing to and fro."

102. *How? ask ye? like one blind she raised her chin.*

*i.e.* "If any one ask how her looks could express expectation of my reply, when her eyes, which are the chief index to the desires, were closed, let him know that the chin, &c."—*Venturi*.

114. *When down the arch my years were now descending.*

In the *Convito*, Dante likens human life to an arch—now mounting and now descending. Sapia was so exasperated against her countrymen the Siennese, by whom she had been banished, that she prayed for their defeat. "She was so elated with the success of her prayer, that she was heard, it is said, to utter that impious bravado in the text; or, according to Landino, she challenged the Almighty to do his worst: she defied him as she had acquired the utmost of her wishes."—*Boyd*. In like manner do we often disclaim God in our hearts, when we are relieved from dangers, or have attained our desires.

123. *As cried the thrush, one transient gleam espying.*

The latter days of January are called in Lombardy "thrush days," and are supposed to be particularly cold, on account of the vengeance January still wreaks upon the thrush; who once finding the season become suddenly mild, boasted that she no longer feared January.

127. *Had not Pier Pettignano kindly thought.*

"A Florentine or Siennese hermit, who by his prayers accelerated Sapia's admission into Purgatory. Without this intercession, she would have remained on the outside among those who have delayed repentance till death."—*Daniello*.

137. *Of the infliction to be borne below.*

In the last circle, where the proud are punished, and to which Sapia supposes (line 140) Dante is about to return. "He acknowledges himself proud, rather than envious; and he seems already to feel the weight of the stones upon his back."—*Alfieri*. (See canto xi. 26.) Though in his journey through the preceding circle, the P denoting the sin of pride had been erased from Dante's brow, he confesses his fears that when returned to earth he should again indulge that passion. Envy is the vice of a little mind. Such was not Dante's.

152. *Whose hopes in Telamon will prove more vain.*

The Siennese hoped by the acquisition of Telamone, a sea port, to become great; but its situation in the Maremma was so unhealthy that they were obliged to abandon it, after losing many seamen and admirals. "They say the Siennese formerly believed that a subterraneous stream, which they called Diana, passed under their city; in hopes to discover which, they incurred great expense."—*Vellutello*.

## CANTO. XIV.

1. *Whom do I see slow winding round our hill.*

This conversation is supposed to pass between two noble Florentines, Guido del Duca, and Rinieri da Calboli of Romagna.—See lines 81, 88.

13. *Whence comest thou, and what thy name ?*

Sed vos qui tandem, quibus aut venistis ab oris ?—Æn. i. 369.

16. *And I: "Through Tuscany a streamlet flows.*

The Arno rises in Falterona, a mountain in the Appennines, which are said (line 33) to be fruitful in streams, since the Tiber also rises among them. The course of the Arno is, according to Villani, 120 miles.

32. *The lofty range whence is Pelorus riven.*

From the source of the Arno (see note, line 16) even to its very mouth, *i.e.* throughout the Valdarno, Virtue is exterminated.—Pelorus—a mountain in Sicily. Hence Milton, "A hill torn from Pelorus."—*Par. Lost*, i. 230; and both from Virgil, *Æn.* iii. 414.

"Hæc loca vi quondam et vasta convulsa ruina  
(Tantum ævi longinqua valet mutare vetustas)  
Dissiluisse ferunt, cum protinus ntraque tellus  
Una foret: venit medio vi pontus, et undis  
Hesperium Siculo latus abscidit; arvaque et urbes  
Littore diductas angusto interluit æstu."

The remainder of this canto, like the sixth, to which it is allied, is devoted to show the depravity of Italy. For the history of the times, see note to canto vi. 76.—Ugo Foscolo, in his *Discorso* (p. 101), alluding to the lines that follow, exclaims: "This in Tuscany!—without respect of factions, and only to take the vices most prominent in each city!" Such a poem, he adds (page 102), however offensive, had it been published in Dante's life time, would conciliate favour after his death—"attributing the depravity of manners to the true cause—the long wars of the Church for the purpose of usurping temporal power, and the tyrannical confederacy of strangers with the popes."

43. *Mid brutal swine, more worthy to be fed.*

By the "swine" are meant the inhabitants of the Casentine.—By the "curs" (line 46), the Aretines. "The Aretine peasants seem to inherit the coarse surly visages of their ancestors, whom he styles 'Bottoli.' The valley widened, as we advanced; and when Arezzo appeared, the river left us, abruptly wheeling off from its environs at a sharp angle, which Dante converts into a snout; and points disdainfully (line 48) against the currish race."—*Forsyth's Italy*, p. 102. By the "foxes" (line 53), are intended the Pisans.

55. *Yet will I speak, though by another heard.*

Guido del Duca, continuing to address his companion Rinieri da Calboli, says he will not leave off, though another, meaning Dante, hear his discourse. He then proceeds to utter a prophecy—"Thy grandson, &c." which, he says, Dante will do well to bear in mind, that he may not be taken by surprise when the evil day comes.—"M. Fulcieri de Calboli, grandson of Rinieri, with whom Guido is speaking, was Podestà, or chief Magistrate in Florence, in 1302; and was bribed by the Neri to imprison and put to death many distinguished persons among the Bianci: hence, having called the Florentines 'wolves,' Guido, continuing the allegory, calls the



grandson of Rinieri, 'the hunter' of these wolves. The river Arno is called 'fell,' from the character of those who live on its banks."—*Lombardi*.

64. *Blood-stain'd, he issues from the mournful wood.*

The "mournful wood," signifies Florence. See *Inf.* i. 2, and notes. "By the expressions which follow this announcement (line 67), it appears that the Author, though he puts the words into the mouth of Rinieri, felt their sting most severely."—*Ottimo Commento*.

78. *That thou desirest I should do for thee.*

"Guido reproaches Dante for his unwillingness to mention his name, when (line 19) he merely said he came from the banks of the Arno."—*Lombardi*.

85. *Such crop I gather from the seed I sow'd.*

*O race of man! your hopes why fix ye there,  
Where none may be partakers of your good.*

"Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap, &c."—*Gal.* vi. 7. "O race of man," exclaims Guido, "why set your heart on earthly goods, which (unlike mental and spiritual possessions) are necessarily enjoyed by one person to the exclusion of another, and tend to encourage envy and selfishness?" See this more fully explained in canto xv. 45, and note. "O angustas et inopes divitias, quas nec pluribus habere totas simul licet, et ad quemlibet sine cæterorum paupertate non veniunt!"—*Boethius*.

99. *Oh, how degenerate is Romagna's blood!*

Your good and great men of Romagna, he says, have all vanished—Manardi of Faenza, Licio of Valbona, Traversaro of Ravenna,

and Guido di Carpigna of Montefeltro.—How changed are ye, since a Fabbro (Fabbro de' Lambertacci of Bologna) and a Bernardin (Bernardin di Fosco of Faenza), both, men sprung from low origin, could exalt themselves by their talents, while ye, sprung from a noble stock, are thus degenerate!

109. *The dames, the knights, the labour, and the ease  
That wooed us on to love and courtesy.*

"Le donne, e i cavalier, gli affanni è gli agi,  
Che ne 'nvogliava amore e cortesia."

"These two lines," says Ugo Foscolo (*Edinburgh Review*, vol. 30), "have such a charm to Italian ears, that Ariosto, after having sketched a thousand beginnings for his poem, and decided upon an indifferent one, which was printed, finally rejected them all in the second edition, and substituted almost word for word the verses of Dante."

"Le donne, i cavalier, l'arme, gli amori,  
Le cortesie, l'audaci imprese io canto."

112. *O Brettinoro! why not get thee gone.*

Guido apostrophises his native place, Brettinoro, a beautifully situated castle in Romagna, and recommends even it, if possible, to remove elsewhere.—Bagnacaval, Castrocaro, and Conio—castles in Romagna, here personified as representing their several families.

118. *And well shall also the Pagani fare.*

Dante here assumes the form of prophecy, and declares the good that will result to the younger Pagani, lords of Faenza and Imola, on the death of their father Mainardo or Machinardo Pagani, a man of such craft as to pass by the name of "il Diavolo." Not, says Dante, that the surviving and degenerate family will then

afford a specimen of the worth of their ancestors.—Ugolino of Fantoli (line 12)—a noble and virtuous inhabitant of Faenza.

133. "*By him who findeth me shall I be slain.*"

The words of Cain, after he had slain his brother Abel through envy. (Genesis iv. 14).—This and the following examples of the evil effects of envy, accompanied with fearful sounds, are intended as warnings to terrify mankind from the indulgence of this passion.—Aglauros (line 139) was daughter of Erictheus, king of Athens. Envyng her sister beloved of Mars, she was changed into stone by that Deity.

143. *When thus he said: "That was the curb severe.*

*i.e.* The restraint alluded to (xiii. 40), "But of the bridle different is the sound." These examples, he says, ought to curb your desires, but ye are ever ready to take the bait held out to you by the devil; and in vain for you "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy work."—*Psalms* xix. But the all-seeing God observes, and punishes you accordingly.

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## CANTO XV.

1. *As much as e'en betwixt the third hour's close.*

In Purgatory it wanted three hours of sunset. On earth, where the poet was writing, it was night or nearly dawn. According to the Ptolemaic system, the sphere or heavens are in a perpetual whirl, and ever restless like a child:—an allusion to Horace (*Art. Poet.* 160), "*mutatur in horas.*"

12. *And wonder seized me at the glare unknown.*

The Angel appears, by whom the brand of envy is to be removed. Man, subject to sin, cannot sustain his brightness. See *Inf.* vi. 166.

16. *As when from water or a glass, the ray.*

"Sicut aquæ tremulum labris ubi lumen aheuis  
Sole repperçussum, aut radiantis imagine luuæ  
Omnia pervolitat late loca, jamque sub auras  
Erigitur, summique ferit laquearia tecti."

*Æn.* viii. 22. Quoted by Cary. See also Lucretius iv. 212.—The light was reflected upon Dante (line 22) by the Angel, who received his radiant glory from God himself.

38. *"Bless'd are the merciful," in sweetest lay,  
"And thou victorious one, do thou rejoice."*

The words of our Saviour—"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy."—"Rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven."—*Matt.* v. 7, 12. This exclamation is made by the Angel after he has cleansed Dante from the sin of envy.

45. *He spoke of good, with others shared or not.*

A reference to the last canto, where Guido del Duca, confessing that envy was his besetting sin, made an exclamation, warning mankind in general against the vice: "O race of man," &c. (xiv. 86, where see note.) "Vestræ vtro divitiæ, nisi comminutæ, in plures transire non possunt. Quod si factum est, pauperes, necesse est faciant quos relinquant."—*Boethius*. "He who desires to rid himself of the torch of envy, let him seek that possession which is not narrowed by the number of participants."—*St. Gregory*.

67. *That Good ineffable which dwells above,  
As ray to lucid body swift descends,  
So, in unbounded fulness speeds to love.  
The warmth it finds, the same it still bestows;  
And wide soe'er as charity extends,  
Beyond it still the eternal virtue glows.*

If that most beautiful exhortation of St. John, "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God," &c. (1 John, iv. 7) admits any comment, it may be found in this stanza of Dante.

80. *E'en as the two, each still remaining wound.*

As of the seven wounds inscribed in your forehead by the Angel (ix. 112), two are healed, viz. pride and envy, so do you now take care to heal the remaining five.

83. *But paused,—when coming to another round.*

Here we enter the third circle, in which anger is punished.—"Examples of forbearance and moderation are given in a series of visions, which form a beautiful contrast to the sculptures and other representations in the foregoing cantos. The first is the address of the Virgin Mary to her Son in the temple, after the alarm and

anxiety he had occasioned."—*Boyd*. "Son, why hast thou dealt thus with us? behold thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing."—*St. Luke* ii. 48.

98. *Whose name caused discord 'mid the heavenly race.*

The city of Athens—named after Minerva, Ἀθηνᾶ. In the fabulous contest between her and Neptune, which should give name to the city, she produced in the olive, a gift of more value than the horse of her rival. See Virgil, *Georg.* i. 12, 18.—The wife of Pisistratus, tyrant of Athens, urged her husband to put to death a youth, who, in love with their daughter, had kissed her in public.

106. *With fury then inflamed, I saw a crowd  
Stoning a youth.*

"And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge."—*Acts* vii. 59, 60.

117. *I found my wanderings were not wholly vain.*

Dante had been wrapt up in his vision; and awakening from it, says it was not a mere passing dream, but was so far real that the contemplation of these instances of charity had wrought their effect upon him, and opened his eyes to a more enlarged benevolence.

143. *A vapour dense and dark as blackest night.*

The circle we are coming to, is that in which the wrathful are punished. Since anger blinds the intellect, they are supposed to be involved in a thick smoke or mist.

## CANTO XVI.

1. *Nor gloom of hell, nor shade of blackest night,  
When not a star illumines the barren heaven.*

“ Buia d’inferno è di notte, privata  
D’ ogni pieneta sotto pover cielo.”

“ Deep, thick, black night, that scarce possess’d a star  
To make its horrors visible.” *Ragg, The Deity, p. v.*

In this magnificent description, Dante reminds us of the power of the Inferno. The excessive darkness purports to be a fume proceeding from wrathful souls; but when considered as the opening of a canto, whose object is to show that the wickedness of the world proceeds from the instrumentality of the papal power, it is probable that Dante intended to describe the darkness of ignorance, in which it has always been the policy of Rome to involve her benighted subjects.

19. *And “Agnus Dei” was their prelude still.*

“ Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.”—*St. John* i. 29. The prayers which the poet puts into the mouth of the souls in Purgatory are always expressive of sentiments opposite to their former vices: hence the wrathful record the humility of our Saviour.

46. *I was a Lombard, Marco was my name.*

Marco Lombardo was a Venetian of great influence, worth, and liberality. He says (line 47), he “loved that virtue which no one now follows.”

*55. Single before, that doubt is now made twain.*

Guido del Duca (canto xiv.) had spoken of the degeneracy of his countrymen. The suspicions created in Dante's mind, when speculating on the cause of this degeneracy, are doubled by Marco's opinion.

*67. Ye who are living, to the heavens ascribe.*

"One," Marco says, "attributes the wickedness of Italy to the influence of the stars—another to the perversity of man. Supposing, however, the stars to possess a certain influence, it is not necessarily predominant, but may be overcome by man, if he exercises that free-will with which he is endowed." See canto xviii. 72. That Dante did not believe in the influence of the stars, is evident from canto xx. 13; though he here speaks according to popular belief. See 2 *Esdras*, vii. 57.

*85. Forth from His hand, who, ere it see the day.*

This Platonic idea of the Creator having the model of all things in his mind, ere they were fashioned, is adopted by Cowper, and by Akenside.

"Not so the mind that hath been touch'd from Heaven,  
And in the school of sacred wisdom taught  
To read his wonders,—in whose thought, the world,  
Fair as it is, existed ere it was." *Task*, b. v.

"From the first  
Of days, on them his love divine he fix'd,  
His admiration: till, in time complete,  
What he admired and loved, his vital smile  
Unfolded into being."

*Pleasures of Imagination*, b. 1.



95. *A ruler hence, who of the city true.*

The "true city" seems to point to the prophetic Zion of the Scriptures, whose future site Dante supposes will be on the summit of the mountain. See canto xxxii. 100, and note.

100. *And hence it is, the tribe who see their guide.*

"The tribe," "la gente," generally interpreted to mean the common people, evidently refers to the clergy. (See canto vi. 91, and note.) "He compares the Pope, on account of the union of the temporal with the spiritual power in his person, to an unclean beast in the Levitical law."—*Cary*. "The poet here proceeds to reprobate the attachment to temporal goods, displayed by the clergy in his time; and from their bad example deduces the cause of the general infection of the whole flock. The chewing of the cud, or act of rumination being generally interpreted to refer to wisdom, and the cloven hoof to the practice of it, he appears to attach to the cloven hoof the sense of liberality, in opposition to avarice, or the 'pugno chiuso' of the *Inferno* (vii. 57): thus, instead of saying, that the prelates of his time, however they might preach up liberality and contempt for worldly goods, did not encourage it by their own example, he says, that they chewed the cud, but had not the hoof divided."—*Lombardi*. "It is well known that in the dark ages the clergy defended all the enormities mentioned by the Apostle, encouraged the people by their false doctrine to commit them, and went before them in the practice of these enormities."—*Macknight*, ad 2 *Timothy*, i.

106. *To Rome, which taught the ancient world good deeds.*

Rome, the source of evangelical instruction, which in its simple form purified mankind, was wont to have two suns—viz. the Emperor, and the Bishop of Rome, each possessing their several powers—the spiritual and the temporal. The union of the two is

the cause of the evil. See Introduction. "The foundations of popery were laid indeed in the Apostle's days, but the superstructure was raised by degrees, and several ages passed before the building was completed and the man of sin revealed in full perfection....The Emperor of Rome, 'he who letteth,' was taken out of the way, and the Bishop of Rome was advanced in his stead: at length the pope grew up above all, and 'the wicked one' was fully manifested and revealed; or the lawless one, (*ὁ ἀνομος*) as he may be called; for the pope is declared again and again not to be bound by any law of God or man. His coming is after the energy of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders...and is it not too generally known that the pretensions of the pope and the corruptions of the Church of Rome are all supported and authorized by feigned visions and miracles, by pious frauds and impostures of every kind?"—*Bishop Newton, Diss. xxii.*

117. *Ere Frederick had sustain'd his overthrow.*

In olden times, before the defeat of Frederick II. (*i.e.* before the union of temporal and spiritual power in the person of the Pope) Lombardy (the country wash'd by Adige and Po, line 115) was famed for valour and courtesy. See canto xiv. 109, and note.

124. *Curado da Palazzo, good Gherard.*

The former a gentleman of Brescia—the latter of Trevigi, surnamed "The good." "Let us suppose that Gherardo da Camino had been the grandson of the meanest hind that ever drank of the Sile, or the Cagnano, and that his grandfather was not yet forgotten; who will dare to say that Gherardo was a mean man; and who will not agree with me in calling him noble?"—*Convito*. Guido da Castello—a virtuous and hospitable citizen of Reggio; of such simplicity that he obtained the name of "the plain Lombard"—according to the French custom of calling all Italians Lombards.

129. *Herself into the mire with all her freight.*

"It was evident," says Mr. Stebbing, speaking of the sensuality and debasement of the catholic clergy, "that unless some great effort were made, the church, if not religion itself, must soon sink under the burden which its secular accompaniments obliged it to bear."—*Hist. of the Church; Lardner's Cab. Cycl.*, vol. ii. p. 200.

132. *Better the sons of Levi to exclude.*

Now, says Dante, I understand why the tribe of Levi was excluded from all share in the distribution of the land of Canaan; viz.—that not interfering in worldly concerns they might better attend to the duties of their sacerdotal office:—so likewise, if the Church of Rome had confined herself to her proper limits, the affairs of religion would have been better attended to.

136. *To dupe or try me is thy speech preferr'd.*

i.e. "I cannot doubt but you have heard of the good Gherard, though you pretend not. In naming him (line 125), Marco had not mentioned his residence, as he had Currado's, and thus an opportunity was afforded to make enquiry and dilate upon his merits."—*Lombardi*. The only other title he condescends to give, is, that of the father of Gaia, a lady whose virtue and beauty were known throughout Italy.

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## CANTO XVII.

17. *Light moves thee, in the clime of heaven self-wrought.*

Dante, being about to describe the imaginative pictures of anger, asks what power it is, that when the scuses are lulled asleep and cease to perform their operations, raises up the images which fancy presents to the view. He answers—that they emanate directly or indirectly from the Supreme Being—either through the medium of stars and Angels, or by the direct infusion of his grace.

20. *Her crime who was transform'd into the bird.*

*i.e.* Progne, wife of Tereus, and sister of Philomela. To avenge herself on her husband for his infidelity and incest with her sister, she slew and served up to her husband their son Itys. According to most poets Progne was changed into a swallow, Philomela into a nightingale. Dante, however, follows those, according to whom Progne was changed into the nightingale.—“the bird excelling all that in the song delight” (line 21)—“the wakeful bird,” that

“Sings darkling, and in shadiest covert hid  
Tunes her nocturnal note.” *Milton. Par. Lost*, iii. 39.

26. *One crucified, enraged, and fierce to view.*

Haman, prime minister of king Ahasuerus.

34. *Before my sight a youthful maid arose.*

Lavinia—mourning for her mother Amata, who, infuriated at the supposed death of Turnus, hanged herself. Virgil, *Æn.* xii. 601.

“Multaque per mæstum demens effata furem  
Purpureas moritura manu discindit amictus,  
Et nodum informis lethi trabe nectit ab alta.”

53. *Its very radiance to itself a cloak.*

In a similar manner the Angel is described (line 57), as " veiling his presence with excess of light." Hence Milton, *Par. Lost*, iii. 375.

" Thysel invisible  
Amidst the glorious brightness where thou sit'st  
Thron'd inaccessible; but when thou shad'st  
The full blaze of thy beams, and through a cloud  
Drawn round about thee like a radiant shrine,  
Dark with excessive bright thy skirts appear."

69. *The peacemakers, exempt from wrath.*

" Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God."—*St. Matthew* v. 9. " This fanning of the wing signifies that the Angel thereby removed from Dante's forehead the mark designating the sin of anger."—*Vellutello*.

91. *Creator nor created being e'er.*

" The profound reasonings on the nature of love (occupying the remainder of this and the beginning of the next canto) are replete with poetical beauties, from which all may derive benefit."—*Biagioli*.

108. *Are all things from self-hatred far removed.*

" It is impossible for any being, either to hate itself, or to hate the First Cause of all by which it exists. We can therefore only rejoice in the evil which befalls others."—*Cary*. Of this evil pleasure in the misfortunes of others, Dante makes a triple division—pride, envy, and anger. These three vices, which have been punished in the preceding rounds, are here severally described (lines 115, 118, 121).

## CANTO XVIII.

14. *Show me that love, to which each virtuous deed.*

In reference to the last canto, line 104—"their error" (line 17), meaning, as explained afterwards, the error of those who declare "love of every kind is in itself deserving praise."

19. *The soul which is created prone to love.*

*i. e.* As God loves his own perfections (see canto xxviii. 91.),—so man created in the image of God naturally loves the image of perfection. But whatever images of good attract man, he never finds full repose (line 32) till he sets his heart on Perfection itself; for nothing less than God can afford an object of permanent and unbounded love: In his love will our happiness hereafter consist: to attain that love should therefore be the end of our existence here.

26. *That inclination, springing up, is love.*

"He teaches us that love is nothing but an attachment of the mind to an object; and as he supposes the mind already bound to self-preservation through natural love (canto xvii. 91), so he says, that by means of this love, arising from pleasure, a new bond is created."—*Lombardi*.

73. *Free will is term'd 'the noble faculty.'*

"Wherefore remember," says Virgil, "the expression, in case Beatrice should discourse with you on the subject." This hint is in reference to *Paradiso*, v. 19.

78. *Like to a bucket all on fire ;—so bright*

*She stemm'd the heaven through ways lit by the sun.*

"The moon being in the fifth night of the wane, has exactly the figure of a brazen bucket, round at the bottom, and open at the top; and if we suppose it to be on fire, we shall have, besides the form of the moon the colour also."—*Lombardi*. The moon passed with a motion opposite to that of the heavens, through the constellation of the Scorpion, in which the sun is; when to those who are in Rome he appears to set between the isles of Corsica and Sardinia.

83. *To Pietola, than Mantua e'er hath been.*

Pietola, formerly called Andes, a village near Mantua, was the spot where Virgil was born; and therefore more to be celebrated than Mantua itself. The "load," is to be understood of Dante's questions, to which Virgil had given a satisfactory solution.

93. *Whene'er the Thebans call'd for Bacchus' aid.*

These instances are adduced to show the zeal and fervour of the spirits now, in contrast with their former lukewarmness. Statius tells us that the Thebans used to invoke Bacchus by night, proceeding in great numbers to the banks of the rivers Ismenus and Asopus, where with lighted torches and loud cries they called the deity by his various titles.

100. *The Virgin strove in haste the hills to gain.*

"And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill-country with haste into a city of Juda; and entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elizabeth."—*St. Luke* i. 39. These examples of dispatch are recited to spur on the lazy and lukewarm.—Julius Cæsar, quitting Rome, went to Marseilles; whence, leaving

Brutus with a part of his army to besiege that city, he proceeded with great expedition into Spain, and defeated Pompey's generals at Ilerda, now Lerida.

103. "*Haste, haste,*" the others cried.

"This is instead of an amen, and pronounced with emotion by all the other spirits behind, showing how precious time is here. Let us make haste, say they, in order that the grace of God, which through our lukewarmness in vain shone upon us heretofore, may be revived through our present zeal and solicitude."—*Ottimo Commento*. "All our mischances, if we come properly to examine their origin, arise from our not understanding the use of time."—*Dante, Convito*.

118. *San Zeno's Abbot in Verona I.*

Alberto, a natural son of Alberto della Scala, Lord of Verona—who, though deformed in body and mind (line 124), was by his father (line 121) forcibly made Abbot of San Zeno, a monastery in Verona, in the time of Frederick Barbarossa, ironically called "good."

135. *Ere Jordan's stream beheld his destin'd heirs.*

The Israelites, for whom God opened a way through the Red Sea, all died, with the exception of Joshua and Caleb, before they reached the river Jordan, as a punishment for their lukewarmness and disobedience.

138. *A life inglorious for their portion chose.*

A part of the Trojans who accompanied Æneas, fatigued with their long voyage, chose rather to remain with Acestes in Sicily, than follow their leader into Italy. See Virgil, *Æn.* v. 718.



## CANTO XIX.

1. *It was the hour when now the heat of day.*

The hour of dawn, when the heat received by the earth during the day is at last overcome by night.—The increased cold on a moonlight night is a fact universally attested by gardeners, who attribute to the moon-beams the effect produced on their vegetables. The heat is said to be overcome by earth, indicating its natural cold state when deprived of the sun.—The planet Saturn is also supposed to possess a chilly influence.

5. *Their Greater Fortune in the east explore.*

Geomancers, when they divined, formed figures, named after certain stars. To one of these they gave the name of "Fortuna Major," "Greater Fortune." This rose in the east, and thus furnished Dante with another means of indicating the morning, when, as he tells us (ix. 18.), dreams prove true. The account of the two ladies, Falsehood and Truth, seen in the following dream, reminds us, as Mr. Cary observes, of the choice of Hercules.

15. *With love's own colour quickly was renew'd.*

*i.e.* That specious hue which worldly objects assume, so as to deceive even those who are most on their guard. Hence Dante could scarce maintain the integrity of his reason, which was assailed through the medium of his senses.

22. *Ulysses from his course I drew astray.*

See *Inferno*, xxvi. 91, when Ulysses says he was "detained by

Circe more than twelve months."—"It is not easy to determine why Ulysses, contrary to the authority of Homer, is said to have been drawn aside from his course by the song of the Syren. No improbable way of accounting for the contradiction, is, to suppose that she is here represented as purposely deviating from the truth. Or Dante may have followed some legend of the middle ages."—*Cary*.

31. *She seiz'd the other, nor delay'd to uncloze.*

Spencer seems to have imitated this passage in his description of Duessa or Duplicity, unrobed and exhibited in all her deformity. *Fairy Queen*, B. i. C. viii. st. 46.

"So, as she bade, that Witch they disaraid,  
And rob'd of roiall robes, and purple pall,  
And ornaments that richly were displaid;  
Ne spared they to strip her naked all."

59. *To those above us now sole cause of woe?*

*i.e.* "In the three higher rounds of Purgatory, where are punished the avaricious, the greedy, and the luxurious."—*Venturi*.

61. *Spurn thou the dust that earth would round thee fling.*

The scriptural command (Matt. x. 14.) to "shake off the dust of the feet," implies here, renunciation of all future intercourse with the syren. "Demitte temporalia," is the gloss in the late Mr. Roscoe's manuscript, now in possession of Mr. Panizzi.—The "lure," properly a falconer's term (see the next stanza), signifies here the heavenly bodies, according to the Psalmist: "The heavens declare the glory of God," as before alluded to, xiv. 148:

"Heaven calls you, and on every side displays  
Its everlasting beauties."

71. *A multitude indulging loud lament.*

These sufferers in the fifth circle are the avaricious, represented as lying with their faces to the ground—an appropriate punishment for having devoted all their thoughts to earthly pursuits. This song: "My soul hath cleaved to the dust," is from Psalm cxix. 25.

84. *The point in which their apprehension err'd.*

They were ignorant that Dante was alive.

92. *That which you need, to turn to God again.*

Repentance—or that satisfaction to the divine justice which weeping accelerates—necessary, previous to acceptance with God.

99. *That great St. Peter's successor was I.*

Pope Adrian V. of the family of Fièschì.—He died in 1276 having enjoyed the dignity little more than a month.—The river mentioned, line 101, is the Lavagno, in the Genoese territory.—The only person brought forward as an instance of avarice is a Pope. In the *Inferno*, speaking of those he found in the circle of avarice, he says (vii. 46):

" Priests once, both Popes and Cardinals are they,  
Whose heads uncover'd are devoid of hair;  
O'er them foul avarice held unbounded sway."

"The Romish clergy have carried their love of money to such a height that they pretend to sell heaven for money, even to the wretchedest of men, under the name of indulgences."—*Macknight, ad 2 Timothy*, iii. 2.

134. *Be not deceived—a fellow labourer I.*

Out of respect to the dignity of the Pope, Dante had fallen on

his knees; when Adrian, aware of it, bids him arise, alluding to Rev. xxii. 8, 9. "And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the Angel which shewed me these things. Then said he unto me: See thou do it not, for I am thy fellow servant.....worship God."—Hence it is evident, that in Dante's opinion any thing like worshipping of Angels, much more worshipping the Pope, is idolatry; and (what is curious) St. John, in the chapter referred to (v. 15), adds, "Without (the city) are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whatsoever loveth and maketh a lie."

137. ————— ' *They marry not on high.*'

"For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the Angels of God in heaven."—*Matt.* xxii. 30. Thus, says Adrian, the ties are dissolved by which I was married to the church.

143. *My niece Alagia—pure and innocent.*

"On earth, he says, I have only one relation left, to whom, according to your offer (v. 96), you may carry tidings of me."—*Lombardi*. "Alagia, daughter of the Count of Fièschì, and who does not appear to be praised, unless to heap greater disgrace on her family, was the wife of Morello Malespina."—*Ugo Foscolo*, *Disc.* p. 171.

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## CANTO XX.

1. *In vain strives will with mightier will contending.*

Pope Adrian V. having signified to Dante, at the conclusion of the last canto, his unwillingness to prolong his conversation with him, the poet is obliged to give way, though anxious to obtain further information. In this state of dissatisfaction he likens himself to a sponge yet thirsty.

10. *Curst be thou, ancient Wolf!*

Avarice is "the ill by which the world is all possessed."—The She-Wolf is the same as in the *Inferno*, i. 49. (where see note); i. e. the avaricious Court of Rome, where she is described in similar language. *Inf.* i. 98.

"Her clamorous wants she ne'er can satisfy,  
And food but serves to whet her hunger still."

15. *When will the victor to destroy her come?*

Can Grande della Scala, of whom see *Inf.* i. 101, and notes.

32. *Which Nicholas unto the virgins made.*

A father, about to prostitute his three daughters through excess of poverty, was relieved by the liberality of San Nicholas, who gave each a marriage portion.

40. *"Not in the hope of comfort thence," said he.*

i. e. You need not mention me to my posterity on your return to earth. I can hope nothing from their prayers: they are all too wicked.

43. *Of that ill favour'd plant was I the root.*

"I was the first," says Hugh Capet, "of the dynasty now ruling over France, whence so many bad kings have sprung." The cities of Flanders, mentioned line 46, had been seized with fraud or force in 1299, by Philip the Fair, called by Dante (canto vii. 109) "the bane of France." "To him," says Ugo Foscolo, "Dante perpetuates the deserved titles of debaser of the coin, and vindictive tyrant; and on him, from the first to the last canto of the *Comedia*, are launched forth the most intolerable reproaches."—*Discorso*, p. 104. The vengeance here prophetically invoked, had already arrived—the French having been driven out by the Flemings in 1302;—for though Dante's poem is supposed to bear date in 1300, it was not actually finished for some years after.—"Dante traces the genealogy of the Capets—their acts and crimes—the influence of the kings of France on the church, and on Italy, from Hugh Capet to Louis X.; and this history, comprehending a period of 347 years, is contained in fifty lines."—*Ugo Foscolo, Edinburgh Review*, No. 58.

53. *All the more ancient race of kings was gone.*

*i.e.* When the posterity of Charlemagne and the second race of French Monarchs had nearly failed.—Charles of Lorraine is generally supposed to be designated by the one "in sable vestment:" but according to Biagioli, Charles the Simple.

60. *From whom the consecrated bones come down.*

The royal bones are termed "consecrated," from the practice of anointing kings. This interpretation is preferred to that of Lombardi, who explains "*sacra*ti" to mean "execrated."—"Louis IX. and his brother, Charles of Anjou, married two of the four daughters of Raymond Berenger. See *Par.* vi. 134."—*Cary*.

67. *Charles entered Italy, and, for amends.*

Charles of Anjou.—“The popes, from their implacable enmity to the house of Suabia, not only refused to recognise Manfred’s title, but endeavoured to excite against him some rival capable of wresting the sceptre out of his hand. Charles, Count of Anjou, the brother of St. Louis, undertook this; and he received from the popes the investiture of the kingdom of Naples and Sicily, as a fief held of the Holy See. The Count of Anjou’s efforts were crowned with success; Manfred fell in battle; and he took possession of the vacant throne. But soon after, Charles sullied the glory he had acquired by the injustice and cruelty with which he put to death, by the hands of the executioners, Conradin, the last prince of the house of Suabia, and the rightful head of the Neapolitan crown.”—*Robertson, Charles V.* sect. iii. Of Manfred, see notes, canto iii. 107, 123, 140.

69. *To heaven again Aquinas for amends.*

Thomas Aquinas, so virtuous that he is said to have come from heaven, is supposed to be sent back again by Charles, at whose instigation he was poisoned for denouncing his iniquitous government. “Vengeance overtook the haughty monarch, who died of grief, after seeing Italy rebel, and his son made prisoner.”—*Landino*. Charles is said to make amends for one crime by committing another; and this is repeated, to give greater force to the irony.

71. *That draws from France another Charles.*

Charles of Valois.—Through his means Dante was banished. See history of that event in notes to *Inf.* vi. 60. The following account by Jacopo della Lana may be added. “On his arrival at Florence, Charles, by his treachery and deceit drove out the party of the Cerchi. In the end he acquired neither land, nor riches,

nor honor. But leaving Florence in great confusion and dissension, he went to Naples, and with all his army (levied in Italy) passed over into Sicily, where he made a pretended peace, and returned to France, after losing the greater part of his troops." His arms, says Dante, were those of the traitor Judas; and he intimates that he justly obtained the name of Lackland, as a punishment for his offences.

79. *The other, prisoner made.*

Carlo Novello, king of Sicily and Apulia, son of Charles of Anjou.—He set out from France to recover Sicily, in 1282, the year of the Sicilian vespers. He was captured in an engagement with the fleet of Peter, king of Arragon. He sold his daughter Beatrice, to Azzo da Este, for thirty thousand florins.

86. *Entering Alagna, lo the fleur-de-lis.*

"In order to eclipse," says he, "all crimes, past and to come, behold the fleur-de-lis (the arms of France) entering Alagna by order of Philip the Fair, for the purpose of seizing Pope Boniface VIII." Of him see notes *Inf.* xix. 77. Dante shows his respect for the church, and laments the insults offered to it, though in the person of his greatest enemy. (See *Introd.* to *Inf.* p. xii.) Soon after the seizure, Boniface died of rage and grief. (*Villani*, viii. 63.)

91. *I see the modern Pilate.*

Philip is termed the modern Pilate, for his cruelty and treachery. In 1310, he suppressed the order of the Templars by a general seizure throughout his kingdom. His "setting his greedy sails into the temple, unbidden," means his licentiousness in converting to his own use the property of the Church. "When," says Dante, (line 94) "shall I behold, O Lord, that vengeance accomplished, which being already determined in thy secret judgment, thy retributive justice now contemplates with delight.?"—*Vellutello*.



97. *She whom I praised—the Holy Spirit's spouse.*

This is in reference to the exclamation, "O blessed Mary," &c. (lines 20, 22, &c.) "Instances of liberality and humility," he says, "form the subject of our vows during day, but during night, examples of avarice, such as Pygmalion (Virgil, *Æn.* 347), Midas, Achan (*Joshua*, vi.), Heliodorus, &c." The latter (line 113) was sent by Seleucus, king of Syria, to Jerusalem, for the purpose of carrying away the treasures of the temple, when "there appeared unto them an horse, with a terrible rider upon him, and adorned with a very fair covering, and he ran fiercely and smote at Heliodorus with his fore feet."—2 *Maccabees*, iii. 25. Of Polydorus, see *Euripides*, *Hecuba*; *Virgil*, *Æn.* iii. 49; *Inf.* xxx. 19.

116. *And last of all, 'O Crassus,' is our cry.*

Marcus Crassus chose Parthia as his province, in the hopes of great plunder. The Parthians pretended to fly—deceived, and surrounded him; when, to avoid falling into the enemy's hands, he caused himself to be slain. Having found his body, they cut off his head and placed it in a golden vase, with this inscription, "Aurum sitisti, aurum bibe."

132. *Her double progeny, the eyes of heaven.*

Delos, as Virgil relates (*Æn.* iii. 76.), was subject to tremblings, till Latona there brought forth her twin offspring, Apollo and Diana, whom, from their being identified with the sun and moon, Dante here calls "the eyes of heaven."

## CANTO XXI.

1. *The natural thirst which ne'er can be allay'd.*

At the conclusion of the last canto, Dante says he never experienced such desire of knowledge as he did to ascertain the cause of the mountain's shaking. This thirst of knowledge, not to be satisfied but by divine grace, continued to trouble him as he proceeded over the road obstructed by the recumbent spirits. The allusion is to St. John, iv. 15, "The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not."

10. *A shade appear'd to us.*

The poet Statius; see line 91, when he first becomes known to Virgil. He appeared to Dante as suddenly as our Saviour to the two disciples going to Emmaus.—*St. Luke*, xxiv. 15.

25. *But because she who spinneth night and day.*

Lachesis—(see canto xxv. 79) sister to Clotho and Atropos, of whom *Inf.* xxxiii. 126.

40. "*So holy is this mountain,*" he commenced,  
"*That by no strange irregularity,*" &c.

In reply to Virgil's enquiry why this mountain shook, Statius tells him, he must not suppose that its so shaking proceeded from any accident, or that the holy mountain could be subject to any irregular changes—that, however it might tremble lower down from external causes (line 55)—in the higher region where they were, no shock was ever experienced, except on the occasion of a purified spirit taking its departure to Paradise.

44. *Heaven to itself hence pleases to receive.*

"Di quel ch' 'l Ciel da sè in sè riceve.

Translated on the authority of Lombardi, supported by Biagioli, who proves, by citing the last line of canto xxiii, that "da sè" means "da lei," "from the mountain;" *i.e.* as rendered "hence." Thus, the purified spirit, arriving at Paradise from Purgatory, is what God is said to receive from the mountain unto himself, as more fully explained line 58, &c.;—and this is the only cause of any commotion.

46. *Therefore nor falleth rain, nor snow, nor hail.*

"Apparet Divûm numen, sedesque quietæ,  
Quas neque concutiant venti, neque nubila nimbis  
Adspargunt, neque nix acri concreta pruina,  
Cana cadens, violat; semperque innubilis æther  
Integit, et large diffuso lumine ridet."

*Lucretius, iil. 18.*

54. *Whereon St. Peter's Vicar sets his feet.*

The gate of Purgatory. (Canto ix. 104.)

56. *But here, whatever winds in earth are pent.*

Tasso has the same idea in that celebrated passage, "Chiama gli abitator dell' ombre eterne," &c. (Book iv.) of which I venture to give a translation.

Sounding hoarse summons through the eternal gloom,  
The trump Tartarean speaks the approaching doom.  
Tremble the caverns, dismal, deep, and vast;  
And the black air rebellows to the blast.  
Not so, from heaven when forked light'ning flies,  
The thunder rolls, and rattling rends the skies;  
Nor, fostering winds that in her bosom break,  
Does earth so shatter'd to her centre shake.

65. *For, as it erst was prone to sin.*

"Che divina giustizia con tal voglia."

This is the reading of the Nidobeatina: adopted by the Paduan, instead of "contra voglia."—The meaning seems to be: "The same earthly disposition to look downward, which caused their sins, is suffered to continue awhile as their punishment."

76. *"The net by which ye are bound.*

*i. e.* "The desire to satisfy divine justice."—*Lombardi.* In the same year with the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, Statius tells us (line 82) he won his fame.

88. *So sweet the vocal spirit that I breathed.*

"Tanta dulcedine captos afficit ille animos," says Juvenal, speaking in praise of Statius.—*Sat. vii.* Naples was "the country of his birth," not Tolosa, as Dante states, in common with many others, confounding the poet with a rhetorician of the same name.—The *Achilleid* is the work which Statius lived not to complete.

104. *With look that silent said: "Be silent thou."*

"Con viso che tacendo dicea, taci."

A picture is given in one line. The following verses are, in the original, remarkably chaste and natural. Dante spoke not, but could not avoid a smile at the praise Statius had unknowingly lavished upon Virgil in his presence.

111. *Where the soul's image is most clearly shown.*

"And as oft-times in this our mortal state  
We see affection pictured in the eyes."

*Paradiso, xviii. 22.*

## CANTO XXII.

8. *And "blessed" had those holy shades repeated.*

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled."—*Matt.* v. 6. Dante hears this on entering the sixth circle. Having had another P removed from his brow, he is able to keep pace with Virgil and Statius.

10. *"That love which Virtue kindles.*

These words are addressed to Statius:—"Quippe cum propter virtutem et probitatem eos etiam quos nunquam vidimus quodammodo diligamus."—*Cicero, De Amicitia*. Juvenal (line 13) flourished shortly after Statius; whose Thebais he praises.—Virgil resided in Limbo, whence he was summoned to conduct Dante.

40. *'Unto what evils dost thou not excite  
The human breast, O cursed love of gold!*

"——— Quid non mortalia pectora cogis  
Auri sacra fames?" *Virg. Æn.* iii. 56.

"Had I not profited," he says, "by your reprehension of mankind in these words, I should be suffering the punishment of the prodigal and avaricious in the Inferno." (vii. 28.)—Virgil's mistake arose from not considering that the same punishment is assigned to both, as explained by Statius in the following lines.

57. *Waged by ill-starr'd Jocasta's double curse.*

Eteocles and Polynices.—Contending for the kingdom of Thebes they slew each other, and thereby caused a double source of woe

to their mother Jocasta. See *Inf.* xxvi. 54, and note. Clio is the muse invoked by Statius. "Quem prius heroum Clio dabis?" "To judge from thy compositions," says Virgil, "you were not then a believer in that faith, without which 'it is impossible to please Him.' (*Hebrews*, xi. 6.) If so, what heavenly grace or human learning burst the darkness of thy mind, and enabled thee to follow the steps of St. Peter?"

70. *When thou didst prophecy, 'A world revived,  
Justice restored, primæval days return'd,  
An offspring born, from heaven itself derived.*

The prophecy of the Sybil—applied by Virgil to Octavius (*Ecl.* iv. 5); and by Dante here applied to our Saviour.

"Magnus ab integro sæclorum nascitur ordo;  
Jam redit et Virgo, redeunt Saturnia regna;  
Jam nova progenies cœlo demittitur alto."

"In reading several passages of the prophet Isaiah, which foretel the coming of Christ, and the felicities attending it, I could not but observe a remarkable parity between many of the thoughts and those in the *Pollio* of Virgil. This will not seem surprising, when we reflect that the *Eclogue* was taken from a Sybilline prophecy on the same subject."—*Advertisement to Pope's Messiah.*

112. *She who disclosed the freshening spring Langià.*  
Hypsipile. See note, canto xxvi. 92; also *Inf.* xviii. 86.

142. *Mary, who pleads for you, took more delight.*

i.e. "The blessed Virgin (who answers for you now in heaven) when she said to Jesus at the marriage of Cana of Galilee: 'They have no wine,' regarded not the gratification of her own taste, but the honor of the nuptial banquet."—*Cary.* See canto xiii. 29.

## CANTO XXIII.

11. "*My lips, O Lord*"—*whose soul subduing force.*

"O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall show forth thy praise."—*Psaln* li. 15.

23. — *and all their features were so spare.*

"It is useful to compare the passage of the Latin poet (Ovid, *Met.* L. viii. 801) with the imitation, to see the greater energy and grandeur of Dante."—*Biagioli.*

"Hirtus erat crinis, cava lumina, pallor in ore,  
Labra incana situ, scabri rubigine dentes,  
Dura cutis, per quam spectari viscera possent:  
Ossa sub incurvis extabant arida lumbis."

The story of Erisichthon of Thessaly (who cut down a grove sacred to Ceres, and was afflicted by the goddess with insatiable hunger) is also taken from Ovid. *Met.* viii. 877.

30. *When Mary on her infant offspring fed.*

The Hebrew lady—who suffering the pangs of starvation during the siege of Jerusalem by Titus, fed on her own son, thus fulfilling the prophecy of Moses, *Deut.* xxviii. 56.

32. *Who readeth "omo" on man's visage.*

The word 'omo' (*i.e.* uomo, or man) is supposed by some to be represented in the face—the two eyes forming the O's, and the eyebrow and nose the M, which letter is more marked in these

emaciated countenances.—The apple and the water alluded to line 35, are the tree and the stream mentioned in the last canto (lines 131, 137), and again in the present (line 62, &c.)

48. *And brought Forese to my mind again.*

A great friend of Dante—brother of Corso Donati.—“All the scene between Dante and Forese—their embrace—their exclamations—their greetings, breathe of domestic affection and the remembrance of former intimacy.”—*Ugo Foscolo, Disc.* p. 193.

72. *When ‘solace’ is the word I should have said.*

“He intimates that the spirits experienced a greater pleasure in satisfying the divine justice, than they did torment, in suffering hunger and thirst.”—*Lombardi.* “We are actuated,” says Forese, “by the same desire as our Saviour, when he exclaimed, ‘Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani.’ As He, though fearing death, voluntarily and joyfully underwent it, in order to save mankind; so these souls, though fearing to renew their thirst, voluntarily return to the tree, and excite fresh pain for the purpose of purifying their desires.”—*Vellutello.*

85. *“It was my Nella, who so soon,” he said.*

Forese's young and virtuous widow.—Through her intercession for the soul of her husband, the period was shortened which is usually required before the admission of a sinner into Purgatory, “where” (line 84) “time mispent must be by time restored:”—or, as described line 89, “the coast that stays our feet.” The mention of his wife's piety and worth leads Forese into a severe invective against the Florentine ladies of that day.—Barbagia is a tract in Sardinia, to which Florence is compared for the immodesty of its females.



## CANTO XXIV.

7. *And I, continuing my discourse, thus spake.*

*i. e.* The discourse relative to Statius, at the conclusion of the last canto.—In order to prolong the enjoyment of Virgil's company, Statius, he says, proceeds more tardily than he otherwise would do.

10. *But say where dwells Piccarda, if thou know.*

"Piccarda Donati (sister of Forese and of Corso Donati) was a most beautiful maiden, who took the veil, and devoted herself entirely to the service of God. Her brothers, however, who had promised her in marriage to a Florentine, forced her against her will.—Her health immediately declined, and she died, passing to the Spouse of the Church, to whom she had dedicated herself."—*L'Anonimo*. "Beatrice excepted, Dante introduces not into his poem any damsel so amiable as Piccarda, nor any wife who in conjugal virtue can equal the widow of Forese."—*Ugo, Foscolo, Disc.* p. 191, 194. Piccarda is assigned a place in the Paradiso, iii. 49.

20. *Is Buonagiunta the Lucchese.*

A poet of Lucca.—The lean face beyond, who is said to have "held the Church in his arms" was Simon of Tours, afterwards Pope Martin IV. "He was so great an epicure that he killed the eels of Bolsena by putting them into the wine called vernaccia."—*Landino*. Jacopo della Lana says: "He was ever intent on such rarities; and with regard to the belly never exercised the slightest moderation. And after him followed Pastors, Cardinals, Bishops, Abbots, and other Priests, who in this faculty would surpass even the mitre of Pope Martin....And so notorious was the good life

they led, that they were said to need the following qualities,—the neck of a bull—a face like the sun—the gait of an ox—and a belly all powerful." "Such," adds the Paduan Editor, "were the clergy of these times. We should not, therefore, accuse Dante of exaggeration, and of showing himself ill inclined to the prelates of the holy church."

28. *Ubaldin della Pila there I saw  
Through hunger grinding air—and Boniface,  
To many with his crozier giving law.*

Ubaldin della Pila—a noted glutton. Boniface—Bishop of Ravenna. The meaning of the third line, "Che pasturò col rocco molte gente," has been much disputed. The Paduan Editor interprets "rocco," "a crozier," and "pasturò," "gubernavit, rexit."

31. *I saw Marchese, who at Forlì erst.*

Marchese of Forlì. "His butler telling him, it was said in the city that he did nothing but drink, he desired him to answer, that he was always thirsty."—*Venturi*.

38. *Gentucca," hoarsely mutter'd from that place.*

The murmur came from the parched throat of "him of Lucca," i.e. the above mentioned Buonagiunta, who was most anxious to notice Dante.—"Gentucca—a noble and beautiful maiden of Lucca, of whom Dante during his exile at that place, was enamoured. This happened two years after the supposed date of the poem, 1300, and is therefore alluded to here in a prophetic manner." *Lombardi*. Dante's curiosity is excited, and he endeavours to prevail upon Buonagiunta to gratify it; but he is content to inform him shortly (verse 43) that a lady (this Gentucca) is born, who, though not yet grown up, shall endear to him the city of Lucca, however infamous for its speculators. *Inf.* xxi. 41.

51. '*Ladies who in the ways of love are versed.*'"

"Donne, ch'avete intelletto d'amore."

This is the first verse of a canzone composed by Dante, in praise of Beatrice, in his *Vita Nuova*. He is asked if he is the author, and answers :

"One am I who indite  
When love inspires, and as he speaks within,  
So, in accordance with his bidding, write."

Thus Milton, *Sonnet to the Nightingale*.

"Whether the Muse or Love call thee his mate,  
Both them I serve, and of their train am I."

"Dante refrains from mentioning his name ; but, whilst he describes himself in such a manner as to give an exalted opinion of his genius, ascribes the merit to love, by whom he was inspired."—*Ugo Foscolo, Edinburgh Review*, vol. 30.

55. "*Brother," he said, "I ken the cause."*

Buonagiunta confesses, that adopting an artificial style, he and others had lost sight of nature.—The Notary (Jacopo da Lentino) and Guittone (of Arezzo) were poets of those times.—The latter is mentioned in the same list with Dante and the two Guidos, by Petrarch, who had the vanity to fancy himself superior to the great Tuscan.

64. *E'en as the birds that winter near the Nile  
Marshal their numbers in compact array.*

Dante is fond of alluding to the cranes. Thus in the *Inf.* v. 46.

"As chaunting forth their melancholy lay,  
The clamorous cranes are borne upon their wings,  
High marshalling in air their long array."

See also *Purg.* xxvi. 43. ; *Par.* xviii. 73.

67. *So all the people that were there.*

They had slackened their pace to observe Dante; and now, when Forese, one of their party, seemed to have finished his speech, they renew their haste in order to complete their purification.—Forese, however, lags behind to enquire when he should again see his friend. Dante answers, he knows not when he shall die, but that Florence is so lost to goodness, he cannot quit life and return again too quickly.—Allusion is made to Corso Donati, chief of the Neri or Guelphs, and the supporter of the mob against the ancient families. He was brother to Dante's wife, and at the same time his political enemy. Hence he is never mentioned by name. He was suspected of aiming at sovereign power. "Called upon to answer the charge, he defended himself with arms, till being abandoned and endeavouring to escape out of Florence, he fell, near one of the gates of the city—was trodden upon by a horse, and killed by the incensed populace."—*Ugo Foscolo, Disc.* p. 137. What is here prophetically alluded to, and not to be more clearly revealed (line 90), took place eight years after; *i. e.* in 1308. See history, in note to *Inf.* vi. 60.

121. *Recal those monsters, it resumed.*

The Centaurs, invited by Pirithous to his wedding, intoxicated themselves, and endeavoured to carry off the bride, but were prevented by Theseus. (See *Horace, Odes*, i. 18.) They are mentioned as instances of gluttony; as well as the Hebrews, (v. 124) who knelt down to drink of the river. See *Judges*, vii.

150. *Which all around ambrosial odours shed.*

"Ambrosiæque comæ divinum vertice odorem  
Spiravere."

*Virgil, Æn.* i. 403.

## CANTO XXV.

2. *For unto Taurus the meridian now.*

"The sun had passed the meridian two hours; and that meridian was now occupied by the constellation of Taurus; to which as the Scorpion is opposite, the latter was consequently at the meridian of night."—*Cary*.

20. ————— *How can it be that they  
Can e'er grow thin who have no need of food?*

Having expressed his astonishment at the excessive leanness of the spirits (xxiii. 34, 37.), Dante at last ventures to enquire how they who require not food should so consume away. This gives rise to the following curious investigation. It is fabulously related of Meleager (line 22), that when he was born, the fates ordained his life should last as long as a brand which they put into the fire. "Dante intends to show, that as Meleager was consumed away, not by want of food, but by the decree of the fates; so, by divine ordinance, leanness may exist among the shades who require not food."—*Lombardi*.

25. *And hadst thou thought, how, in a mirror seen.*

As the reflection of a form in a mirror undergoes the same modifications with the form itself—so the ghostly shade or image of the body is affected by the changes of the soul.

29. *Lo Statius here, whom I intreat and pray.*

i.e. "I pray that Statius, who is a Christian, may answer your question relative to the union of the soul and body. By his aid

your wounds will be healed; *i.e.* he will remove from your mind the pain produced by your thirst after knowledge."—*Costa*. Statius, before he complies, apologises to Virgil for presuming to become a teacher in his presence, although at his desire.

37. *Pure blood, required not by the thirsty veins.*

"The formation of the human body and the nature of the soul is treated of by Dante with such skill and learning, as shows that though he was most fully employed in active life, he had a perfect knowledge of all the liberal sciences.....I declare that as often as I have read this part of Dante's poem, and I have done so by night and by day a thousand times, my wonder continually increases, and I discover new beauties, new ideas, and consequently new difficulties on every perusal."—*Varchi*.

62. ————— *here one more wise than thou.*

Averroes—who taught that there is only one universal mind distributed throughout the human race; because he saw no particular organ (as the eye to the sight) assigned to the intellect, considered as an individual faculty.

77. *Behold the sun, whose ray descending full.*

"As the heat of the sun, reaching the aqueous humours of the vine, changes them into wine; so, would Statius infer, the new spirit, created by God, and united to the sensitive soul, changes it into a reasoning soul."—*Lombardi*.

85. *To one or other bank, without delay.*

*i.e.* Either to the bank of Acheron (*Inf.* iii. 123.), or to that of the Tiber (*Purg.* ii. 101). On its arrival, the soul first learns its final destination. All the faculties being rendered sharper,

the soul is capable of reasoning intensely on its future condition ; and hence arises a source either of hopeless misery or joyful anticipation.—“ This gives us the most awful view of the intermediate state that can be conceived ; for we hereby see that it is the hour when no man can work, while it is, at the same time, that in which the soul will behold more clearly than ever the extent both of its folly and its danger.”—*Stebbing, Discourse on Death*, p. 144.

94. *Thus doth the circling air that form assume.*

“ This aerial vesture of the soul is not a poetical fiction, but is founded on the opinion of Origen and other ancient fathers.”—*Lombardi*. “ It seems only consistent with reason, that the same analogy should hold good, in the life to come, between the external body, and the soul which inhabits it, as prevails between them in this life.”—*Greswell on the Parables*, vol. i. p. 438.

106. *Whate'er desires or passions actuate.*

“ This is the answer to the question, line 30—how the spirits could grow thin ; viz. that the soul, in this second state, is possessed of the same appetites it indulged in its first state.”

118. ——— “ *Now must a tighten'd rein.*

The necessity is pointed out of keeping a watch over the thoughts and also over the eyes, in reference to the admonition of our Saviour, Matt. v. 28.—The words that follow, “ O God of clemency,” are the beginning of a hymn of the church (“ *Summæ Deus clementiæ*”), offered up for chastity.

131. ———— *and chased Callisto thence.*

According to the fable, Diana, on discovering the pregnancy of Elice or Callisto, one of her companions, drove her away.

CANTO XXVI.

12. " *No fictitious body he appears to have.*

See note to *Inf.* xii. 13.

18. *Not for my sake alone an answer grant.*

" Thirst is here used metaphorically for desire of knowledge—  
thirst for a reply, as the speaker manifests in the following lines."  
—*Lombardi.*

54. *Some future day, a state of peace to win—*

These spirits are the same alluded to, *Inf.* i. 118.

———— " in fire contented to remain ;  
For hope is their's, in heaven's untroubled clime,  
Some future day, an honour'd seat to gain.

59. *A lady high enthron'd this grace attains.*

Beatrice. See *Inf.* ii. 70, and *Introd.* to *Inf.* page xiv.

63. *That heaven, where love and ampler space abound.*

*i.e.* The heaven, or " heaven of heavens," the most spacious as  
well as the most exalted, and abounding in a pre-eminent degree  
with divine love. (See canto xi. 2.)

78. *The opprobrious cry of ' Queen' by Cæsar heard.*

See *Suetonius (Life of Julius Cæsar)*, cap. 49, where it is added,  
" Gallias Cæsar subegit ; Nicomedes Cæsarem."



92. *Guido am I.*

Guido Guinicelli—of whom see note, xi. 97.—Penitence before death enabled him, he says, to enter Purgatory thus early. Dante calls him "father" (line 97), as being his predecessor and instructor in Italian poetry. His joy, he tells us, upon seeing him was like that experienced by the sons of Lycurgus on finding their mother Hysipile. Lycurgus, exasperated with her for deserting his infant son Ofeltes, (killed by a serpent, while she went to show the Argive army the river Langià, canto xxii. 112.) was about to slay her, when her sons Thoas and Eumenius had the delight of finding her, and saving her from the king's resentment. (See Statius, *Theb.* iv. and v.) Dante's gladness was not so manifest, since the fire prevented his running to embrace Guido.

100. *Speechless and hearing nought, I pensive went.*

"He was commiserating human frailty, and thinking how so learned a man could have fallen into such vice."—*Landino*.

116. (*And with his finger pointed out a shade.*)

Arnaud (see line 142), the celebrated Provençal poet—considered by Dante superior both to Guido and Gerault di Berneil, ("him of Limoges"). Petrarch also places him at the head of the Provençal poets, and calls him "Gran maestro d'amore."

129. ——— *the Abbot of the college.*

*i.e.* Paradise. Abbot is here used in its original sense. "Abba signifies Father in the Jewish language."—*Dr. Doddridge*. See St. Mark, xiv. 36.; Romans, viii. 15. "Offer unto Christ, says Guido, a paternoster for my salvation—not the whole of the Lord's prayer, but as far as is needful for us who can no more commit sin, *i.e.* as far as 'Lead us not into temptation.'"—*Landino*. See canto xi. 22.

## CANTO XXVII.

1. *The sun was darting now his earliest beam.*

"It was sunrise at Jerusalem, mid-day in India, midnight in Portugal, and sunset where the poets now were."—*Boyd*.

23. *On Geryon's back once led thee safely through.*

Geryon was the monster who carried Virgil and Dante on his back, down from the seventh to the eighth circle of the Inferno. xvii. 91.

36. *This wall divideth Beatrice and thee.*

*i. e.* This flame is the only obstacle between thee and Beatrice. Virgil well knew the effect of the mere mention of her name.

44. *"How! stay we here?"*

*i. e.* "Have we endured such toil in passing through the Inferno and ascending Purgatory, to remain here, when we are so near Beatrice?"—*Landino*. "That is laudable," says Aristotle, "ὅν ἐνεκα πολλὰ πεπείνηται ἢ δεδραπνηται."—*Rhetoric*. A. 5.

58. *"Come, O ye blessed of my Father."*

St. Matthew, xxv. 34. These words are sung by the Angel, so shrouded in his own effulgence as to be invisible to Dante.

91. *Thus ruminating, and on these intent.*

*i. e.* Intent on contemplating the unusual splendour of the stars.

101. *That I am Leah.*

Leah, the daughter of Laban, the first wife of Jacob.—She is the personification of active life—her sister Rachael, of contemplative life. “My delight,” says Leah, “is to look into the mirror of God, and adorn myself with active virtues, while my sister is satisfied with contemplation.”

115. *That most delightful fruit.*

The “promised fruit,” *Inf.* xvi. 62; i. e. true happiness, which men anxiously seek where it cannot be found,—among the deceitful and perishable things of this world.

127. — “*The fires both temporal and eterne.*”

The fire of Purgatory and of Hell.

136. *Here mayst thou stray, or rest beneath the shade.*

i. e. Till the arrival of Beatrice.—The more to excite Dante, Virgil calls to his memory the kind and affectionate manner in which she first undertook to assist him, alluding to the *Inf.* ii. 115.

“This said—her eyes, all glistening in her tears,  
Beauteous, she turn'd.”

142. ————— *be mitred and be crown'd.*”

i. e. Now thou art thine own master, free from the bondage of sin, and possessing sound views of religion, I invest thee with those insignia of power over thyself by which kings in civil, and bishops in religious affairs, show their authority over others.

## CANTO XXVIII.

6. *Whose fragrant soil breathed odours all around.*

“ Now gentle gales,  
 Fanning their odoriferous wings, dispense  
 Native perfumes, and whisper whence they stole  
 Those balmy spoils.” *Par. Lost*, iv. 156.

“ Prepare, reader, to admire the divine beauties which the poet is about to spread before thee.—Alfieri, whom no beauty escaped, has marked the whole of this canto, with the exception of twenty-eight verses.”—*Biagioli*. The “heavenly forest” is the terrestrial Paradise, or abode of our first parents. See Introduction.

19. *E'en such a murmur, as from bough to bough  
 Runs through the piny grove on Chiassi's shore.*

“ On the shore of the Adriatic, near Ravenna, formerly stood Chiassi, or Classe, now destroyed. The grove of pines still exists.”—*Lombardi*. The murmur of the pines is introduced by Coleridge (*Ode to Dejection*), when, addressing Liberty as “the guide of homeless winds, the playmate of the waves,” he adds :

“ And there I felt thee! on that sea cliffs' verge,  
 Whose pines, scarce travell'd by the breeze above  
 Had made one murmur with the distant surge;—  
 Yea, while I stood and gazed, my temples bare,  
 And shot my being through earth, sea, and air,  
 Possessing all things with intensest love,  
 O Liberty!—my spirit felt thee there.”

25. *And lo, a stream my further course denied.*

The river Lethe. (See lines 127, 130.)

40. *A lady all alone.*

Matelda—(See canto xxxiii. 119.) This allegorical personage is supposed to be so named in honour of the Countess Matelda, who left large estates to the Church.—“The beautiful maiden seen afar off by Dante, in a landscape of the terrestrial Paradise, instead of appearing an imaginary being, seems to unite in herself all the attractions which are found in those lovely creatures we sometimes meet, whom we grieve to lose sight of, and to whom fancy is perpetually recurring.—The poet's picture recalls the original more distinctly to our memory, and enshrines it in our imagination..... He creates an illusion which no subsequent reflection is able to dissipate. All that grace and beauty, that warmth and light of love, that vivacity and cheerfulness of youth, that hallowed modesty of a virgin, which we observe, though separately and intermixed with defects in different persons, are here concentrated in one alone; while her song, her dance, and her gathering of flowers, give life, and charm, and motion, to the picture.”—*Ugo Foscolo. Parallel between Dante and Petrarch.*

49. *Fair Proserpine thou to my mind dost bring.*

The spring she is said to have lost is explained by Lombardi to mean the “perpetuum ver” of Ovid, i. e. the verdant region from which she was snatched by Pluto: others explain it to mean the flowers she was gathering. The passage is imitated by Milton. *Par. Lost*, iv. 268.

“Not that fair field

Of Enna, where Proserpina gathering flowers,  
Herself a fairer flower, by gloomy Dis  
Was gather'd; which cost Ceres all the pain  
To seek her through the world.”

64. *So glowing—that when Venus felt the blow.*

When Venus was enamoured of Adonis.—This blow her son Cupid is said to have inflicted unawares, contrary to his usual custom. See Ovid, *Met.* x. 125.

80. *But let the psalm, ‘Thou mak’st me glad, O Lord.’*

“For thou, Lord, hast made me glad through thy works, and I will rejoice in giving praise for the operations of thy hands.”—*Psalm* xcii. 4. Did you know, she says, the song I am singing, your understanding would be cleared, and you would perceive the reason of my smile; viz. the delight I take in God, and in beholding the works of his hands in this terrestrial Paradise, “the chosen nest of man.”

86. *With what I lately heard, both disagree.*

Dante had been informed by Statius that the mountain of Purgatory was subject to no changes such as arise from wind, &c. (See *xxi.* 43.) The answer to this question is given, line 97.

91. *The Good Supreme, who in himself alone*

*Delighteth, man made good, and gave this place*

*A pledge of endless peace:—the fault his own*

*If in such blessed realm his stay was short.*

God, “the supreme Good,” is said to delight in himself alone, *i. e.* in goodness, of which he is the perfection.

“Whose fault?”

Whose but his own? Ingrate! he had of me

All he could have: I made him just and right;

Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall.”

*Milton, Par. Lost*, iii. 94.

"When Adam fell, he was expelled from Eden, the type of the favourable presence of God; and became subject to death, with all its dark retinue of wants and pains...But does the misery of man at this hour arise simply from death, and pain, and absence from Eden? Would a healthy immortality in a beautiful garden make him happy? Would the presence of God make him happy? Alas...the presence of the holy God, far from being sought as a blessing, would be shunned as a curse by unholy man...What is the misery of man? His mind is diseased. He was made to regard and enjoy God, as his chief object; and his faculties will not work healthfully in the absence of this object. But he has left God, and wearies himself in seeking good from created things...Yes, we carry hell within us; and were we to walk through Eden, we should blast its sweetest flowers....The great cause of the disorder and misery that distract the human mind, is *averseness or indifference to God*....The sense of sin increases this averseness....The only medicine which can cure this dreadful disorder, must be something which will rekindle love towards God, which will do away fear, and inspire confidence. Now the manifestation of the character of God, contained in the circumstances of the pardon, is exactly fitted for this purpose....He hath loved us, and given Himself for us. The medicinal virtue of the Gospel lies in the manifestation of that love of God, with which God so loved the world as to give his only begotten Son as an atonement for its sins....This is the mighty instrument which breaks the power of sin in the heart, and establishes holy gratitude and filial dependence....Eden is still barred;...but the access into the real presence of God is thrown open; all are invited and urged to come in, that they may ask and receive every blessing which God can grant," (*Erskine, Unconditional Freeness of the Gospel*, p. 11, &c.)—for

"— such wide arms hath Mercy infinite

She welcomes every soul that turns to her." (*Purg.* iii. 122.)

103. *Now, since the air all moves in circling course.*

"Matelda, having shown Dante that Statius had argued correctly, in telling her that the terrestrial vapours ascend not higher than the third step of the stair of Purgatory, now proceeds to explain why the leaves of the forest were in motion."—*Lombardi*.

121. *The streams thou seest spring not from earthly vein.*

"As in Scripture it is mentioned, that in the terrestrial Paradise Tigris and Euphrates sprang from one source—so the poet feigns that from one source sprang the two streams Lethe and Eunoe."—*Landino*. See canto xxxiii. 112; also Milton, *Par. Lost*, ii. 583.

139. *The bards whose fabling verse in ancient time  
Painted the age of gold, the state of bliss,  
Dreamt in Parnassus of this heavenly clime.*

"This dream of the poets is one, in which our best and purest sensibilities are deeply interested; and to which, though we know it to be a dream, our imaginations delight to recur, when they would turn to the contemplation of spotless innocence, and happiness without alloy, by way of relief from the sickening spectacles of wickedness and misery which we see in the world around us." *Greswell's Exposition of the Parables*, vol. i. p. 442.

"I cannot help thinking that the modern commentators on prophecy have reason, when they say that the expectation of the restitution of all things, occupies a much less space in the thoughts of Christians than it ought to do. It is the chief feature of that gospel which was preached to Adam....What Adam was taught to expect, we still look forward to....I speak of a fixed and longing expectation of the sure and fast approaching accomplishment of



those promises which announce the final triumph of the Messiah, and the establishment of his reign upon earth....The gate of Eden will once again be unbarred ; and the banished ones brought back ; and in the mean time, though their path lie through the desert, yet that path is the way of holiness, and in it *He* will be with them, *whose* presence can make the wilderness to be glad, and the desert to rejoice and blossom like the rose."—*Erskine*, p. 110, 111, 115.

Our poet, it will be seen, considers Eden as the seat of the future Zion. (See Introduction.) Ideas extremely similar to those of Dante are beautifully expressed by a modern poet, who though unacquainted with the Italian bard, has, like him, deeply studied the Bible, and arrived at like conclusions.

" From their high harps  
Catching the lofty strains of prophecy,  
The heathen poets sang of gospel days,  
And days millennial, as the reign of peace,  
The restoration of the golden age ;  
And told their children of the coming Christ."  
*Ragg, The Deity, book ix.*

144. *The nectar of whose praise all poets sing."*

" With mazy error under pendent shades  
Ran Nectar, visiting each plant."  
*Par. Lost, iv. 239.*

" Ver erat æternnm, placidique tepentibus auris  
Mulcebant Zephyri natos sine semine flores :  
\* \* \* \* \*  
Flumina jam lactis, jam flumina nectaris ibant.  
*Ovid, Met. i. 111.*

## CANTO XXIX.

3. "*Blessed are those whose sins are wash'd away.*"

"Blessed is he whose unrighteousness is forgiven, and whose sin is covered."—*Psalms*, xxxii. 1.

27. *Refused the veil of ignorance to bear.*

"Say first what cause  
Moved our grand Parents, in that happy state  
Favour'd of heaven so highly, to fall off  
From their Creator, and transgress his will  
For one restraint—lords of the world beside."

*Par. Lost*, B. i. 28.

50 *Seven candelabras recognized, and in  
The vocal strain "Hosanna."*

What, at a distance, first appeared "a flash of lightning" (line 16), and as if "the air was fire" (line 35)—then, "seven trees of gold" (line 44)—on Dante's approaching still nearer, turns out to be seven candelabras. "And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven spirits of God."—*Rev.* iv. 5. They are also called "flames," (line 73.)—The invocation "Hosanna," used on the entrance of our Saviour into Jerusalem, and typical of his second coming, is an indication of his approach now. See line 107, and xxx. 11.

65. *A party following, all in white array'd ;  
Nor was such whiteness ever witness'd here.*

"And one of the elders answer'd, saying unto me: What are these which are arrayed in white robes?....and he said unto me: These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have

washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple."—*Rev.* vii. 13, 14, 15.

" Hark, the church,  
The New Jerusalem, His favour'd bride  
Array'd in white, attending Him through heaven,  
Tunes her unnumber'd voices to the song,  
Hosanna! Hallelujah! Angels join  
The glorious anthem in melodious tones,  
And through the skies re-echo far and wide  
Hosanna, hallelujah. Saints on earth  
Catch the glad sound of joy, and as they rise  
To meet their Lord in airy regions, shout  
Hosanna, Hallelujah." *Ragg, The Deity, book xi.*

75. *As if e'en banners drawn along they were.*

" Le fiamelle avevano sembiante di pennelli tratti, cioè di banderuole stese nell' aria."—*Monti, Proposta, in voce Pennello.* " These streaks signify the light shed by the seven churches throughout the earth."—*Costa.* " As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord."—*Ezekiel*, i. 28.

82. *Under so beautiful a canopy*

*Twenty-four elders then approach'd in view.*

" And round about the throne were four and twenty seats; and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment, and they had on their heads crowns of gold....The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, saying," &c.—*Rev.* iv. 4, 10.; see also v. 8, 9.; xi. 16, 17. " They represent the twenty-four books of the Old Testament."—*Costa.* " Blessed art thou among women" (line 85), the words of the Angel to the Virgin, are here applied to Beatrice.

94. *Each with six wings was plumed; and every plume  
Was full of eyes.*

These four animals are the four beasts or cherubims of Ezekiel and St. John. "And their whole body, and their backs, and their hands, and their wings, and the wheels were full of eyes round about."—*Ezekiel*, x. 12. "And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal; and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne were four beasts, full of eyes before and behind....And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within; and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come."—*Rev.* iv. 6, 8.

102. *With cloud, and fire, and whirlwind's sweeping force.*

"And I looked, and behold, a whirlwind came out of the north, a great cloud, and a fire infolding itself...and out of the midst thereof came the likeness of four living creatures."—*Ezekiel*, i. 4, 5. To this prophet, whose description is the same with that of St. John, except as to the number of the wings (see last note), Dante refers for the rest of their appearance. "And this was their appearance; they had the likeness of a man. And every one had four faces, and every one had four wings...As for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance was like burning coals of fire, and like the appearance of lamps...And the sound of the cherubim's wings was heard even to the outer court, as the voice of the Almighty God when he speaketh....And as for their appearances, they four had one likeness, as if a wheel had been in the midst of a wheel."—*Ezekiel*, i. 5, 6, 13.; x. 5, 10.

106. *The space within the four a car contain'd.*

"This beautiful car appears to be the chair of St. Peter, adorned with evangelical learning. The two wheels which support it—the

Old and New Testament : the four animals, the four Evangelists : the Griffon, to whose neck the car is fastened—a symbol of the two natures of Jesus Christ.”—*Costa*. “The poet could not elsewhere have found a better symbol of the two natures united in one divine person in Jesus Christ—the eagle, which flies higher than any other bird being an excellent symbol of the divinity, and the lion, of the human nature :—particularly as our Saviour is called ‘the lion of the tribe of Juda.’”—*Lombardi*. In the moral of Phaeton’s story (line 118), Jove showed the punishment that awaits pride.

122. *Three damsels ;—one so ruddy.*

*i.e.* “Charity, glowing like a flame—Hope, green as an emerald—Faith, white like driven snow.”—*Lombardi*.

130. *All festive on the left danced other four.*

*i.e.* The four cardinal virtues, Prudence, Justice, Temperance, and Courage. Then come the two old men—the first, St. Luke the physician, hence likened to the celebrated physician Hippocrates, created by nature for the benefit of her favourite, man—the second, St. Paul, “represented with a sword, on account, it should seem,” says Mr. Cary, “of the power of his style.” The four who succeed “of humble guise” (line 142), are said to be the authors of the Epistles, James, Peter, John, and Jude. The aged man in their rear (line 143), is said to be St. John, who is rapt in vision, as being the author of the Revelations, written when he was near ninety.

154. *And with the first bright ensigns took their stand.*

*i.e.* With the candelabras before mentioned.

## CANTO XXX.

1. *When the septentrion of that heaven sublime.*

"As we call septentrion the seven stars of the Ursa Major, visible in our heaven, so Dante calls septentrion, the before mentioned lights of the candelabras."—*Lombardi*. "They perform the same office for Christians that the polar star does for mariners in guiding them to their port."—*Cary*. "The triumph of the Church in her spouse Jesus Christ is continued in this canto:—the septentrion or candelabras representing the Holy Spirit, which knows no change, nor is ever concealed, as the lower heavens are, except through crime."—*Ottimo Commento*.

11. *"Come, Spouse from Lebanon."*

"Come with me from Lebanon, my spouse, with me from Lebanon."—*Song of Solomon*, iv. 8. "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely....Even so, come, Lord Jesus."—*Rev.* xxii. 17, 20. "And I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God, out of heaven, as a bride adorned for her husband....Come hither and I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God."—*Rev.* xxi. 2, 9, 10. Thus Beatrice is shown to be the mystical Church—the New Jerusalem, or Bride of the Scriptures. "This is indeed that Beatrice whom Dante described on 'the great and high mountain,' where he was carried to contemplate her."—*Rosetti, Sullo Spirito Antipapale*, p. 116. "Thy Maker is thy husband, the Lord of hosts is his name, and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel."..."For the Lord shall comfort Zion, he will comfort all

her waste places ; and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord ; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving and the voice of melody."—*Isaiah* liv. 5. ; li. 2. " I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thy espousals....Again will I build thee, and thou shalt be built, O Virgin of Israel : thou shalt again be adorned with thy tabrets, and shalt go forth in the dances of them that make merry."—*Jeremiah*, ii. 2 ; xxxi. 4. In the Psalms the allusions are innumerable. The Bride or Queen is more particularly described in Psalm xlv. " The King's daughter is all glorious within," &c.

" Supreme in perfect loveliness—adorn'd  
As for her husband is the beauteous bride.  
On the glad morning of their nuptial day  
The New Jerusalem appear'd, the bride,  
The city of the Lord. She had no need  
Of sun or moon ; the Lamb, Jehovah, was  
Her light ; and He the temple of her love."

*Ragg, The Deity, book xii.*

The prophetic Zion is described in Scripture under various titles. By *Isaiah*, as " The city of righteousness—the faithful city," i. 26. ; " the daughter of Zion, the hill of Jerusalem," x. 32. ; " the city of our solemnities ; a quiet habitation," xxxiii. 20. ; " the holy city," lii. 1. ; " the city of the Lord—the Zion of the Holy One of Israel," lx. 14. ; " Hephzi-bah, Beulah," lxii. 4.—By *Jeremiah*—" The daughter of Jerusalem," iv. 31. ; " daughter of Zion," vi. 23. ; " the dearly beloved of my soul," xii. 7. ; " the virgin of Israel," viii. 13., xxxi. 4. ; " daughter of Edom." *Lam.* Jer. iv. 21.—By *Ezekiel*—" The Lord is there," xlviii. 35.

13. *At the last summons as the just shall rise  
Each from his cavern, and, with voice again  
Endued, sing Hallelujahs.*

" La revestita voce allelujando."

The reading of " voce," in preference to the common one of " carne," is adopted by Dionisi and the Paduan Editor. The " mandate given" is that of the Angelic Messenger, line 10,—who,

exclaiming "Come, spouse from Lebanon," gave the note of preparation for the arrival of Beatrice. The Hallelujah here chaunted is that in St. John, "Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God....Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready."—*Rev.* xix. 1, 6, 7.

19. "*O blessed thou who comest,*" *they all cried.*

"Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest."—*Matt.* xxi. 9. These words of congratulation, addressed to our Saviour on his entering Jerusalem, are here applied to Beatrice. The remainder, "Scatter we lilies," &c. is from Virgil. "Manibus date lilia plenis."—*Æn.* vi. 884. "Beatrice descends. Every reader is already anxious—expecting to see the poet put forth all his power at the sight of her, by whose means he 'left the vulgar crowd.' Nor will he be disappointed; every one will perceive that the passage is not only one of the most beautiful in the poem, but such an one as could have been conceived and executed by Dante only....What cause for shame have they, who have believed and still believe that there is nothing admirable in Dante but Francesca and Ugolino?"—*Biagioli*. In the following verses of Dante, the same critic recognizes the origin of Petrarch's celebrated lines.

"Da' be' rami scendea,  
Dolce nella memoria,  
Una pioggia di fior sovra 'l suo grembo;  
Ed ella si sedea  
Umile in tanta gloria,  
Coverta già dell' amoroso nembo.  
Qual fior cadea sub lembo,  
Qual su le trecce bionde,  
Ch'oro forbito e perle  
Eran quel dì a vederle.  
Qual si posava in terra, e qual su l'onde,  
Qual con un vago errore  
Girando, pareva dir: Qui regna amore."



34. *And now my spirit (which for many a day.*

Beatrice had been dead ten years. Of her, see *Introd. to Inf.* p. xv. She is wreathed with the olive, sacred to Minerva (lines 31 and 68). Very similar to the strong language of the original is a passage in the *Vita Nuova*. Speaking of his first seeing Beatrice, Dante says, "In quel punto, dico che veramente che lo spirito della vita, il qual dimora nella segretissima camera del cuore, cominciò a tremar sì fortemente, che appariva nelli menomi polsi orribilmente."

47. ————— *confest*  
*Are all the traces of my ancient flame."*

"Agnosco veteris vestigia flammæ."—*Æn.* iv. 23.

"No one," says Biagioli, "has ever, I think, felt and expressed what our poet has here done—struggling at one and the same time with two most powerful sentiments—grief of the severest kind on losing his dearest master and father, and on the other hand, passionate and tumultuous sensations of delight at witnessing the presence of his most beloved and long wished for Beatrice." His fears prevail, and he gives way to tears, which (line 55) cause Beatrice to exclaim: "Dante, weep not,"—the only occasion throughout the whole poem in which Dante mentions his own name.

83. ————— *"My hope, O Lord, hath been in thee."*

"When we have discovered our errors, the Angels, *i.e.* good inspirations, invite us to hope. Hence they sing the 31st Psalm, "In te, Domine, speravi; in which David showing his hope in God, exhorts every man who repents to do the same."—*Lombardi*. "They do not proceed beyond the 8th verse, 'my feet,'—'statuisti in loco spatioso pedes meos;'—the rest of the psalm containing other matter."—*Landino*.

85. *As snow congeals upon the living masts.*

The "living masts," "*vivi travi*," *i.e.* leafless beams—woods, are the "*trabes*" of Ovid and Virgil, used instead of *arbores*. (*Met.* viii. 130.; *Æn.* vi. 181. and ix. 87.) This passage is highly praised by Biagioli. The ninetieth line, "As breathes the gale from Afric's ardent shore," literally rendered, would be:—should that land but breathe where the shadow is lost—meaning Africa, where, under the equator, scarcely any shadow is cast.

93. *Who sing in concert with the eternal spheres.*

*i.e.* The Angels—who (line 83), taking compassion upon Dante, and interceding with Beatrice in his behalf, sang "My hope, O Lord, hath been in thee,"

103. *"Ye keep your vigils in the eternal day.*

*i.e.* "Ye look into that eternal mirror, where all times are present. Ye are not, like mortals, subject to lose sight of passing events through the necessity of sleep."

109. *Not only through those mighty wheels' effect.*

*i.e.* Not only through the influence of the heavens, which direct every one to some good or bad aim, according to the constellation under which he is born, &c. (See *Inf.* xv. 55. and xxvi. 24, where Dante speaks of himself as born under a favourable star.)—The translation, "In early life" (line 115), is not an equivalent to the original, "*Nella vita nuova*;" where an allusion is made by Dante to his work entitled "*Vita Nuova*," written at an earlier period. It opens thus. "*Nove fiate già appresso al mio nascimento era tornato il cielo della luce, quasi ad un medesimo punto, quanto alla sua propria girazione, quando a 'miei occhi apparve prima la gloriosa donna della mia mente, la qual fu chiamata da molti Beatrice, li quali non sapevano che si chiamare.*"

121. *Long time my look sustain'd him.*

"This is capable of two interpretations;—one referring to the personal beauty of Beatrice, which inspired Dante with lofty thoughts, as appears from his canzone and sonnets;—the other in reference to the intellect; viz. that the author, brought up in the study of theology from a child, (to which he was well suited, as he says, *Inf. xv. 59.*) was for some time prevented falling into the vices of the age."—*Ottimo Commento*. And in like manner, says the same anonymous Commentator, are the lines that follow capable of two interpretations—the sensible and the intellectual.

125. *Retook himself to others.*

"Nevertheless, I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love."—*Rev. ii. 4.* "The reproofs of Beatrice are in the moral sense, the reproofs of Theology for Dante having left his sacred studies, in which by divine grace he would have made great proficiency, had he not occupied himself too much in the politics of distracted Florence."—*Costa, Appendix*.

139. *Hence went I to the entrance of the dead.*

See *Inf. ii. 53*; where Beatrice came down to Limbo, "the entrance of the dead," and implored the aid of Virgil for her friend.

## CANTO XXXI.

3. *Turning anon its point direct on me.*

Hitherto Beatrice had addressed herself to the Angels : she now addresses Dante himself.

23. ————— *that Good*  
*Noblest to which the soul of man aspires.*

" In heaven the affections meet, and are for ever united to their proper object. They are filled and satisfied with the presence of God. It is this that they thirst after. They desire his favourable presence as their chief good."—*Erskine, Unconditional Freeness of the Gospel*, p. 33.

42. *In this our court the wheel rebates the edge.*

Divine justice blunts the sword of vengeance.—The " source of tears," " seme del piangere," line 46, is grief.

54. *What mortal things should have allured thy sight ?*

" Ne from thenceforth doth any fleshly sense  
 Or idle thought of earthly things remain ;  
 But all that erst seem'd sweet now seems offencèd,  
 And all that pleased erst now seems to pain.  
 Their joy, their comfort, their desire, their gain,  
 Is fixed all on that which now they see—  
 All other sights but feigned shadows be."

*Spencer, Hymn to Heavenly Beauty.*

" No—rather strive thy groveling mind to raise  
 Up to that unclouded blaze,  
 That heavenly radiance of eternal light,  
 In which enthroned she now with pity sees  
 How frail, how insecure, how slight  
 Is every mortal bliss." *Lord Littleton, Monody.*

59. ————— *some youthful maiden's love.*

It has been supposed that Gentucca of Lucca is here alluded to, mentioned canto xxiv. 37. But as we are there given to understand that Dante knew not Gentucca was then in existence, and Beatrice reproves him for past and not for future errors, Mr. Cary suggests that the poet's marriage with Gemma Donati, and the difficulties in which that engagement involved him, may be the object of Beatrice's displeasure.

61. *These, twice or thrice the new-fledged bird may wait.*

By this proverb Beatrice exemplifies the folly of a man of mature age reverting to earthly pleasures. Hence the irony of telling him to "raise his beard" (line 68), since, having arrived at manhood he ought to possess more wisdom. The lines that follow (64, &c.) are very remarkable for the picture they give, in words so admirably adapted to the subject.

77. *Primæval creatures.*

i.e. The Angels, who (canto xxx. 20.) were represented as scattering flowers around Beatrice.

92. *The lady, whom before I found alone.*

Matelda—whom Dante first saw in the meadow, xxviii. 37.—"Lo, the vision of the author in the preceding canto is actually verified:" (*Ottimo Commento.*) Leah and Rachel (figures of active and contemplative life), being supposed the same with Matelda and Beatrice.

98. *"Asperges me," in strain so passing sweet.*

"Thou shalt purge me with hyssop and I shall be clean; thou shalt wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow."—*Psalm*, li. 7.

104. *Within the dance of the four maidens fair.*

The four cardinal virtues—stars in heaven till they accompanied Beatrice on her descent from heaven : the same mentioned canto i. 23 ; and xxix. 130. They conduct Dante to the Griffon.

116. *Thee have we placed before the emeralds bright.*

The eyes of Beatrice.—St. John, speaking of the throne on which our Saviour sate, says : “ There was a rainbow round about the throne in sight like unto an emerald.”—*Rev.* iv. 3. In the emerald eyes of the bride, the Griffon is supposed to be reflected, alternately displaying the human nature and the divine. The meaning of the “ due reggimenti,” (line 123) may be gathered from the analogous use of the same words, canto xvi. 108, where they signify the two powers—that of the Emperor and of the Pope, united in the person of the latter.

139. *O splendour of eternal living light !*

*Who, though grown pale beneath Parnassus shade.*

Dante acknowledges his inability to describe Beatrice ; although as a votary of the Muses, he says (canto xxix. 38.) that he had “ suffered hunger, watching, cold.”—The harmony (line 144) is that of Angels, who circle the throne of God, rejoicing ;—so beautifully described by Milton, *Par. Lost*, iii. 344.

“ No sooner had the Almighty ceased, but (all  
The multitude of Angels with a shout,  
Loud, as from numbers without number—sweet  
As from blest voices uttering joy) heaven rung  
With jubilee, and loud hosanna's fill'd  
The eternal regions.”

## CANTO XXXII.

2. *To sate their ten years' thirst.*

"The descent of Dante into hell was feigned to be in 1300; and this is pointed out and repeated in a hundred places of the *Divina Comedia*. Beatrice died in 1290. Therefore the ten years' thirst of Dante, signifies the desire he had for ten years felt to see her again."—*Monti, Proposta, in voce, Decenne.*

## 9. ————— "Too earnestly."

Dante is reproved for his too intense contemplation of Beatrice. See xxxi. 118. "He wishes to teach us, that human reason, being limited, ought not to investigate divine subjects too profoundly." *Costa, after Vellutello.* The Nymphs (Dee) who warn him, are the theological virtues, xxxi. 106.

18. *In front both of the flames and of the sun.*

In front of the seven flames or candelabras.

27. *Although so gently, not a plume was shaking.*

"The gentle motion of the Griffon, signifies the calm and steady progress of the Christian religion."—*Costa.*

32. *Void through the guilt of Eve.*

Eden is called "*l'alta selva vota*"—showing that it had been uninhabited since the expulsion of our first parents, though supposed by Dante to remain in its original beauty, as the site of the future Zion. See Introduction.

37. *Then "Adam" mutter'd by them all I heard.*

"O thou Adam, what hast thou done? for though it was thou that sinned, thou art not fallen alone, but we all that come of thee."—2 *Esdras*, vii. 48. This tree is similar to the tree of knowledge of good and evil, canto xxii. 131; but considered as such, it will not, Lombardi observes, adapt itself to what follows, viz. the descent of the Eagle into it, &c. He conjectures that it means the Roman Empire, which overshadowed and protected the Church; and that the idea is from the vision of Nebuchadnezzar, who saw a tree (the type of his kingdom) "whose height reached unto the heaven and the sight thereof to all the earth."—*Daniel*, iv. 10, 20. In the plant despoiled of leaves, Costa recognizes the city of Rome despoiled of its ancient virtues—its fame (line 40) greater, the more it ascends into remote ages. "It spreads the more, the higher it rises, to show that the trees in the terrestrial paradise dilate, since they receive their nutriment from heaven—the reverse of those here, because they receive their's from the earth."—*Ottimo Commento*. This anonymous author, subsequently commenting on line 115, says: "Some consider this tree to mean the cross."—The idea of the Indian grove is from Virgil, *Georg.* ii. 120.

"Aut quos Oceano propior gerit India lucos  
Extremi sinus orbis? ubi æra vincero summum  
Arboris haud ullæ jactu potuere sagittæ."

43. *O Griffon! blessed, that thou dost not rend.*

"Our Saviour's submission to the Roman Empire seems to be intended, and particularly his injunction, 'to render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's.'"—*Cary*. His obedience is also praised, in refusing the Devil's offer of an earthly kingdom. An allusion is made, by contrast, to those Popes who aimed at a temporal as well as a spiritual dominion.

48. *"Yea, yea, for so is righteousness fulfilled."*

"Thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness."—*Matt.* iii. 15.



50. *He drew it to the tree bereft of spray.*

The meaning of this passage is involved in obscurity.—“The tree is said to be ‘bereft of spray,’ because Eve plucked the fruit, whence followed the exile and punishment of man...Then when Christ by his incarnation had restored the human race and reconciled them to God, the tree recovered its foliage (line 55, &c.) Whence this is the figure of the Incarnation of Christ; by which the human race was repurchased from death, to which it was condemned by the crime of our first parents. Our trees, he says, swell out when the sun enters Aries, which succeeds the Pisces.—Displaying in its flowers ‘colours less vivid than the rose, but more deep than the violet’ (line 58), the despoiled plant revived when the car was bound to it; i.e. the Church—of which Christ is the founder—that Sun which illuminates all, and causes every thing both visible and invisible to have its being and to bear fruit.”—*Ottimo Commento*. The colour of the leaves, “less vivid than the rose, but more deep than the violet,” is supposed to refer to our Saviour, from whose side came forth blood and water, and from whose wound, says Lombardi, the Church is mystically derived. “Inspice lateris aperturam, quia nec illa caret rosâ, quamvis ipsa subrubea sit propter mixturam aquæ.”—*St. Bernard*. (*Lib. i. de Pass. Domini*, c. 41.) According to the modern interpretation of the tree, (see note, line 37) it would appear, that the attaching the car to it was intended to show that the Church or Pontifical seat ought not to be removed from Rome, as it afterwards was. “As soon as the apostolical seat was established at Rome, that city, before deprived of every virtue, beautified itself, like plants, which in the spring clothe themselves with leaves and flowers.”—*Costa*.

65. *In sleep, at Syrinx' woe.*

Syrinx was a Nymph beloved of Pan. Her misfortunes formed the subject of the song by which Mercury lulled to sleep the hundred-eyed Argus, appointed by Juno to watch Io.

72. *A voice too, crying: " Rise; what doest thou ?*

The mention of the transfiguration that follows, shows that the words of our Saviour are here alluded to, when his disciples on that occasion falling on their faces, Jesus came and touched them, and said: " Arise; and be not afraid."—*Matt.* xvii. 6. St. Luke alone speaks of the Apostles being " heavy with sleep." (ix. 2). Dante supposes them to have been awakened by the voice out of the cloud: " This is my beloved Son; hear him"—that voice, by which (line 78) " deeper sleep had been overthrown;" *i.e.* that of Lazarus and Jairus's daughter.

73. *As (led to view the flow'rets of that tree  
For whose delicious fruit the Angels pine.*

The apple tree.—" As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons."—*Solomon's Song*, ii. 3. For its fruit the Angels are said to pine, in allusion perhaps to 1 *Peter*, i. 12.—" which things the Angels desire to look into;" and implying, as Lombardi observes, that though the sight of our Saviour causes ceaseless jubilee in heaven," the Angels are ever longing for that food, (xxx. 129.)

" Which, satisfying, wakes new appetite."

87. *'Neath the young leaf, upon the very root.*

Beatrice, accompanied by her handmaids, the three theological virtues, takes her seat under the tree which had been lately renovated; and the Griffon, with the Angels, flies up into heaven.—During his absence Beatrice watches over the Church.

98. *The Nymphs, those lights supporting in their hands.*

The maidens (see last note) surround Beatrice and Dante, bearing in their hands the seven candelabras mentioned xxix. 43,

which, representing "the seven lamps or Spirits of God," are secure from earthly disturbance—Auster and Aquilon being put for winds in general.

100. *Brief space this forest shall thy dwelling be:—  
Of that eternal Rome where Christ commands  
Shalt thou for aye be citizen with me.*

These words of Beatrice are very remarkable—informing Dante that after death he should dwell for ever with her "in that Rome of which Christ is Roman," *i.e.* citizen—"Quella Roma onde Christo è Romano;" meaning Zion, the eternal city, in opposition to the temporal one—the seat of the church on earth. The garden of Eden, and Zion "the holy city upon the mountain," are identified in Scripture. See Isaiah, li. 3.; Ezek. xxviii. 13.; Rev. xxii. 2. The titles of the New Jerusalem are given in note to canto xxx. 11. The city is more particularly described in Ezekiel, xl. and Rev. xxi. Not only the Prophets are full of allusions to it, but the Apostles also make frequent reference to it, directly or indirectly. Matt. xxi. 5.; xxv. 31, 34. Acts, i. 6.; iii. 21. Heb. xi. 10, 16.; xii. 22, 23; xiii. 14. Rom. xi. 26. 1 Peter, ii. 6. Rev. iii. 12.; xxi. 2, 3.—Of the millennium Dante makes no mention; nor is it necessary, in one who believes in the future Zion to make any difficulty as to the 1000 years. "Whether with the earlier fathers of the Christian Church, and some eminent expositors of former times, we are to expect that a resurrection and triumph of the saints shall precede the general and final resurrection, or whether we hold with others that it is not to be a reign of persons raised from the dead, but a renovated state of the Church, flourishing gloriously for a thousand years, it is not necessary to determine. The former interpretation seems to offer the least violence to the language of Scripture, and is supported by great authority."—*Van-Mildert, Boyle Lecture.* "The confident expectation of the millennium is the most ancient, and was once the most catholic or orthodox persuasion of the Church."—*Greswell on the Parables*, vol. i. p. 397.

103. *Look on the car, and what thou seest there  
Forget not to record on thy return.*

"Here Beatrice draws Dante's attention to the car, and admonishes him to ponder every thing well, and bear record for the benefit of the world, on his return to earth. And here is shown the final object of this work, viz. the common good of mankind."—*Ottimo Commento*. This warning is repeated in stronger terms, xxxii. 52.

112. *As swoop'd the bird of Jove impetuous down.*

The eagle—the standard of imperial Rome. See Jeremiah, xvii. 3, 7. The poet relates the misfortunes that happened to the Church—first, the persecutions by the Emperors, typified by the eagle. Not only the tree, i.e. Rome, is injured by the slaughter of its inhabitants, but the car (i.e. the Church or apostolic seat) is driven about, like a vessel before the wind.

119. *A she-fox leap, to greediness so given.*

The fox that causes the second disaster is supposed to represent the treachery of heretics—some say of Pope Anastasius (*Inf.* xi. 8.), others of Arius. The description of the fox is so like that of the wolf (*Inf.* i. 98), that one of the Popes seems to be intended, who pursued his avaricious schemes with great cunning.

126. *And left it with his feathers cover'd o'er.*

The feathers of the eagle (cause of the third disaster) are the riches given by the Emperor to the Pope—*Inf.* xix. 115, where see note. "The voice from heaven addressing the bark is the complaint supposed to be made by St. Peter, that the Church had received so fatal a dowry."—*Vellutello*. Dante has before told us

that owing to the union of temporal with spiritual power, "the Church of Rome was falling into the mire with all her freight." Canto xvi. 127.

131. ———— *and thence in sight a Dragon sped.*

The anonymous author of the *Ottimo Commento*, instead of openly declaring who is intended by the Dragon, quotes St. John. "And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns," &c.—*Rev.* xii. 3. This text was appositely quoted by Frederick II. in reply to Gregory IX., who accused him of blasphemy; saying, "Papam esse belluam de qua scriptum est, 'Et exivit,' &c." and adding, "Ipse est Draco magnus qui seducit universum mundum, Antichristus." In the same chapter of St. John, the Dragon is stiled, "The great dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan." The scriptural identity of the Dragon and Satan, Dante seems to recognise in the person of the Pope, calling him Satan (*Inf.* vii. 1.), and representing him, as Rosetti observes, under the figure of the serpent monster Geryon. (*Inf.* xvii. 12.) The Dragon is described again in the Revelations; and certainly with the express marks of an Antichrist, or a sham Christ. "And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon."—*Rev.* xiii. 11.; *i.e.* pretended to exercise Christian virtues, the more to acquire power and dominion.—The Dragon has generally been interpreted of Mahomet.

142. *The sacred structure, thus diversified.*

The car having been again feathered (line 139) by imperial donations, is wholly transformed, and becomes a very "monster." The author of the *Ottimo Commento* here quotes *Rev.* xiii. 1.: "And I saw a beast rise up out of the sea having seven heads and ten horns," &c.—adding sagaciously, "and on the same subject sufficient is said in the nineteenth canto of the *Inferno*:"—being

that in which Dante openly identifies the Popes with the beast or harlot in the Revelations, (xvii. 3.) with seven heads and ten horns.

148. *Firm as a rock upon some mountain high.*

"He (Dante) proceeds to describe the changed condition of the car, and says there sate upon it a wanton impudent harlot, of whom it is written in the seventeenth chapter of the Apocalypse: 'Come hither, and I will show thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters; *With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her prostitution, &c.* And I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns; And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls....And the Angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her. The beast that thou sawest, was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition....The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth. And there are seven kings, &c ...And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.' Some would have it (*Vogliono alcuni predire*) that this harlot means the court of Rome, adopting what is presently afterwards said in the Apocalypse (xviii. 2); 'Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird; for all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her.' And of this the author had experience in the time of Pope Boniface VIII. when he went as ambassador for the Republic; so that he knew with what sort of eyes he looked, and what sort of a paramour Boniface was—not her legitimate spouse, according to the opinion of many. God knows the truth. The author, however, treats of this subject here and in the nineteenth of the *Inferno*."—*Ottimo Commento*.

" In this vision we meet with the woman of Babylon, the mother of abominations, sitting upon a beast with seven heads and ten horns, being the same animal which Daniel saw, and which he explained to signify the fourth empire. It is the empire of the septimontane city. Accordingly St. John declares that the seven heads are seven mountains."—*Nimrod*, vol. iii. p. 530. See note, canto xxxiii. 34. " The Lucifer of Babylon described by Isaiah, and the harlot of Babylon by St. John, were by the poet recognized as one; whence the Pope becomes both Lucifer and Meretrix. In fact, the supreme head of the Inferno is at one time called 'l'imperador del doloroso regno,' and at another, 'la Regina dell' eterno pianto.'"—*Rosetti, Sullo Spirito Antipapale*, p. 48, 49.

152. *A giant sitting close to her I view'd.*

" Here, in the giant, every one recognizes Philip le bel—if not in the harlot, the Church of Rome,...espoused to few who have not sold her to adulterers to enrich themselves. Some of the papal hierarchy perceived this; and an Archbishop of Milan denounced Dante as an apostle of heresies. But the sacred conclave, dissembling their knowledge, lulled to sleep the popular curiosity upon these allusions; and those who saw through them did not reveal them so openly as to provoke a prohibition of the book. When the Protestants appealed to the words of Dante in testimony of the truth, the Catholic Church, by means of the eloquence of Bellarmine, defended at once the temporal power of the Popes, and proved that the poet was a submissive son of the Church—propositions, to speak the truth, which are at variance with each other, and both of them contrary to the evident truth of the facts....The point, in controversies of this kind, turned on this—that the wickedness of the priests cannot contaminate the sanctity imparted to the Church by its Founder. Dante thought otherwise; and neither saw sanctity beyond the Founder, nor believed that the Priesthood and Church were divisible or different; but that to correct them they must be changed. The iniquities of the Priesthood are revealed in the

three parts of the poem in such a manner that every successive accusation continues to acquire more authority and greater evidence." *Ugo Foscolo, Discorso*, p. 381.

155. *Her dread companion lashed her in fierce mood.*

"When this harlot turned her wanton eye upon the author (Dante), the giant, a fierce paramour, lashed her from head to foot—to signify that she must not turn away from him, since she had prostituted herself for money; *i.e.* that she must not regard any good and virtuous man, who is not ready to make himself drunk with the wine which she holds in her golden cup."—*Ottimo Commento*.

158. ——— and through the wood such distance drew.

"The meaning is, that this paramour of the Roman Court carried away the Church from the tree to which Christ bound it, and withdrew it from the sight of the good, and from a conspicuous situation, into a place of sin, and an obscure wood, full of vice and darkness, as described in the first canto of the *Inferno*. And the giant is well termed a new beast; to signify 'that nature had ceased to create such monsters,' as Dante says, *Inf. xxxi. 50*."—*Ottimo Commento*. Here the author for once speaks out.—The monster, line 160, is the car, rendered monstrous, and is synonymous with the beast.—Philip le bel, during the pontificate of Clement V. removed the Court of Rome to Avignon, in 1305.



## CANTO XXXIII.

1. "*O God, the heathen," thus the holy train.*

"The poet, introducing a lamentation of the seven ladies over the transformation of the car, *i.e.* of the Church, uses the language of the Psalmist, 'O God, the heathen are come into thy inheritance.'" *Psalm*, lxxix. 1.—*Ottimo Commento*. In this psalm David laments over the defilement of the temple, and the persecution of the saints. It is sung alternately by the three theological and the four cardinal virtues.

10. "*A little while—ye shall not me behold.*

"A little while and ye shall not see me; and again a little while and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father."—*John*, xvi. 16. These words, applied by our Saviour to himself, and here adopted by Beatrice, show that She, whether called Wisdom—Sapience—the Church—the New Jerusalem—the Bride—or, the Holy Scripture—is in reality identified with our Saviour. "It is here shown how great was the grief of Beatrice—*i.e.* of the Holy Scripture—on hearing the above lamentation (the passion of the Church)...She answers the seven virtues in the words of the text 'A little while,' &c.; *i.e.* 'Such heresy will enter among the christian people, that I must depart, &c....but not for long; I will appear to the faithful and will reform the Church.'"—*Ottimo Commento*. "In these words I think Dante makes Beatrice predict the short stay of the papal seat at Avignon, and its return to Rome."—*Lombardi*. The thought of evils impending over the Church and the loss of its ancient purity, caused Beatrice to be "*colorata in rosso*." The rhymes are alike in the original; as allowable in the case of a quotation repeated.

15. *That I should follow, and the sage, &c.*

Statius, who remained after Virgil's departure :—the fair damsel  
—Matelda.

34. *Know that the vessel which the serpent hurt,  
Was, and is not, &c.*

"Dante, fixing in the apostolic chair the mysterious woman of the Revelations, 'sitting on a scarlet coloured beast...having seven heads and ten horns,' and considering the beast and the harlot are in substance the same thing,—in order to show how, through the acquisition of wealth, the church had fallen from its primitive sanctity, avails himself of the same formula with the Evangelist, 'And the beast that thou sawest, was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition.' *Rev.* xvii. 8."—*Lombardi*. "He (St. John) tells us that he speaks of Rome as the spiritual and eternal city, as the old city of the whoredoms of the earth, no longer existing in fact, yet still existing in spirit, which was, and is not, and yet is....And when they witness the final consummation, the nations will look back to the beginning, and surveying in their connected series, the prophecies and judgments of the 'King of the Ages,' will exclaim 'Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great.'"—*Nimrod*, vol. iii. 531. The learned anonymous writer of this work quotes the early fathers to show that Rome was identified with the Apocalyptic Babylon "before the growth of the papal authority, when there was not the same motive for endeavouring to dissemble such a clear and salient truth."—"Sic et Babylon etiam apud Joannem nostrum Romanæ urbis figura est, proinde magnæ, et regno superhæ, et sanctorum Dei debellatricis." *Tertullian*.—"Babylonia quasi prima Roma, cum peregrinâ in hoc mundo Civitate Dei procurrit;" and again "Ipsa Roma quasi secunda Babylonia est."—*Saint Augustine*. See *Nimrod*, vol. iii. 167. "Let not him who hath occasioned the destruction of the Church, that vessel which the serpent hroke, hope to appease the

anger of the Deity by any outward acts of religion or other superstitious ceremony; such as was that performed by a murderer at Florence, who imagined himself secure if he ate a sop of bread in wine upon the grave of the person murdered, within the space of nine days."—*Cary; quoted from the Imolese Commentator.*

41. *The approach of stars secure from every bar.*

The author of the *Ottimo Commento* shows that he saw through the meaning of this prophecy. "The revolution alluded to," he says, "signifies that one sent by God shall come, who will destroy all heresy and all simony, and all practicers of simony:" (referring evidently to the simoniacal Popes in the nineteenth canto of the *Inferno*.) "It is said in the Revelations, after treating of the harlot sitting on the beast: 'And after these things I saw another Angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, &c.,...And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, &c.' *Rev. xviii. 1, 2, 9.*"—*Ottimo Commento.*

43. *Wherein one, stamp'd five hundred ten and five.*

"Nel quale un cinquecento dieci e cinque."

"Some explain this text thus: five hundred, *i.e.* D;—ten, X;—five, V; saying, that at this time will come a Leader sent by heaven, who will reduce all the world to God. And this consummation they expect to take place at the end of the world; and cite the poet himself: 'Questi la caccera per ogni villa,' &c. (*Inf. l. 109.*)—Others say an Emperor is intended, &c....but the author means to speak of some great change brought about by Heaven, signifying a most just and holy Prince who will reform the state of the Church and of the faithful Christians."—*Ottimo Commento.* Some suppose Henry VII. of Luxemburg, or Can Grande della

Scala to be here intended; but the anonymous author of the comment above mentioned, who is afraid to speak openly, recognizes evidently the Judgment; when our Saviour will put an end to the corruptions of the Church under the iniquitous system of the papal hierarchy. "Dante here imitates the prophetic style of St. John: 'Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast; for it is the number of a man, and his number is six hundred six score and six,' Rev. xiii. 18.; and means the Roman letters D X V, forming by transposition Dux or Captain."—*Lombardi*. Rosetti adopts the same interpretation with the *Ottimo Commento*—referring to St. John, xvi. "The prince of this world is judged;" and thus reads the Roman numerals—

un	cinquecento	dieci	e	cinque
I	D	X	E	V

by transposition "Judex."—*Sullo Spir. Antip.* p. 275. "These verses show, that in the wicked woman we should recognize the temporal authority of Rome;—the same that in the first canto of the *Inferno*, under the image of a wolf, so terrified the poet, and took away the hope of climbing the beautiful mountain, *i.e.* of realizing his good intentions."—*Costa*. Even Landino confesses that by the thief is meant "the Pope, and the adulterous Roman Court, contaminated with every vice."

### 50. *The events shall be the Œdipus.*

*i.e.* Shall perform the part of Œdipus, in affording an explanation of the enigma; and without the mischief the Thebans suffered from Themis.—"Carmine Naiades non intellecta priorum solvunt ingenii," (*Ovid, Met.* vii. 760.) was the text as it stood in Dante's time—since emended by Heinsius, who substitutes, "*Laiades...solverat*," *i.e.* Œdipus, the son of Laius. This reading is now adopted in the best editions.—Beatrice repeats her injunction to Dante in the last canto (line 103), to record what he had seen, for the benefit of mankind. This seems adopted from St. John, "Write, for these words are faithful and true."—*Rev.* xxi. 5.

**57.** *Which hath already twice been injured there.*

"First, through the offence of Adam."—*Ottimo Commento*. This interpretation, not noticed by modern expositors, seems borne out by xxxii. 37, and the following lines in this canto, (61, &c.). The eagle will then occupy the second place. (See xxxii. 112.) "In the 'five thousand years and more,' (line 62) the poet comprehends the years Adam lived, together with those he passed in Limbo. See Par. xxvi. 118, &c."—*Biagioli*.

**68.** *As Elsa's stream.*

Elsa, a river between Florence and Pisa, possessing petrifying qualities.—False pleasures are compared to Pyramus, darkening the mind with sin, (line 74) as he with his blood dyed the mulberry.

**72.** *The moral of the interdicted tree.*

This is explained by a passage in the *Paradiso*, (xxvi. 115.) where Adam says "that tasting of the tree was not in itself the cause of his long exile, but the transgression of God's commandment;" *i.e.* his disobedience. "The Devil told Eve that obedience to God is not *necessary* for human life, and that a knowledge of good and evil is *quite sufficient*; which is the doctrine of modern philosophy, a philosophy therefore, not metaphorically, but in point of historical fact, diabolical. The Devil did so; but who knew that the Devil lied? There was the difficulty, and the dignus vindice nodus. And God placed enmity between the Son of Man and the Serpent, in order that both men and angels might know that God does not reign by power only, but by righteousness, truth, and mercy; and that clearly, and beyond all doubt, they might behold in Satan, a liar and a murderer from the beginning; and not merely a victim sacrificed to His wrath...patiently awaiting the great verdict of [the universe, on that day when all the ages and families of men shall stand up together, and all the sons of

God shall shout for joy....It was, moreover, impossible for that filial love towards God, which is the state of innocence and of a perfect creature, to be restored, without the creature having a full conviction of His paternal love. For true love exists in reciprocity. ...God could only restore the world to a state of a perfect creation by means of an enormous sacrifice....It was necessary, that the sacrifice should come out of the glory and perfection of the Godhead, in order to silence all blasphemous tongues for ever and ever.... Hereby know we the spirit of truth and the spirit of error....*In this was manifested the love of God towards us*, because that God sent *his only begotten Son* into the world that we might live through him."—*Nimrod*, vol. iv. p. 228, &c.

#### 85. *That thou mayst understand the school.*

The erring school in which Dante had been brought up was that of Popery—"teaching for commandments the doctrines of men," establishing an authority independent of God, and corrupting the primitive faith by the introduction of the most abominable superstitions. Owing to the evils resulting from this system of fraud and hypocrisy, Italy had become the dark and death-like vale described in the first part of the poem. (*Inf.* i. 5.) The effects of this system, Beatrice had taught him, in his journey through the *Inferno*. (See *Purg.* xxx. 136, &c.) She now foreshows the future destiny of the Church, which is so debased and prostituted to mercenary purposes that it becomes utterly transformed and monstrous. In answer to Dante's inquiries, what mean her mysterious words relative to the origin of evil and the moral of the interdicted tree, Beatrice answers, she wishes to convince him of the iniquity of the system he had followed :—a system of practical infidelity, following up the disobedience of our first Parents in believing Satan rather than God, teaching for commandments the doctrines of men, and setting up a fallible man in the place of the infallible God. Such a school, she says, is utterly opposed to the religion of Christ, which bids us put not our trust in man, and inculcates the love of the one true and only God.

113. *Methought were Tigris and Euphrates seen.*

"Tigris and Euphrates are two of the rivers mentioned as flowing through Paradise and proceeding from one source. 'And a river went out of Eden to water the garden, and from thence it was parted.' *Genesis*, ii. 10. Hence Boethius, 'Tigris et Euphrates uno sé fonte resolvit.' But the poet according to his allegory calls one Lethe and the other Eunoe."—*Vellutello*. See Introduction.

## 122. ————— and sure am I

*That Lethe's water hath not made them dim.*

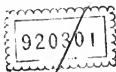
"Lethe takes away only the memory of crime."—*Lombardi*. Beatrice suggests that she herself must be the cause of Dante's forgetfulness—"She who precluded every other thought." xxxii. 93.

130. *Like to some gentle soul, that frameth no  
Excuse, but makes another's will her own.*

Such a picture of gentleness and childlike docility Dante alone could have drawn.

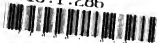
138. *Whose sweetness ne'er had satisfied my heart.*

"Jesus answered and said unto her: Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again; but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be to him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."—*John*, iv. 13. Dante's plan allows him not to say more, "since the thirty-three books assigned to this canticle are full; so that with as many of Paradise, and one more of the Inferno (the first canto forming merely a proem to the whole work), the sum of a hundred cantos will be completed."—*Lombardi*.



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